TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH.

No. 33.

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TESTIMONY

FOR THE CHURCH.

NUMBER THIRTY-THREE.

By Mrs. E. G. White.

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NOTE TO THE READER.

On every side are rapidly increasing indications of the near approach of the final conflict between the forces of good and evil. At this time above all others the special warnings and instruction of the Spirit of God are of vital importance.

It is in view of this crisis that another number of the Testimonies has been issued. The letters, both to churches and individuals, contain instruction for all. The articles on the needs of our institutions and the education of workers will be of special value to those who are connected with the work. Of even greater interest to all classes are those relating to the nature and influence of the Testimonies; our duty in view of the approaching conflict; the relation which workers sustain to the cause and to one another; and the importance of accepting all the light which God is pleased to give, through whatever channel it may come.

The articles on confession not only point out the importance of this duty, but warn against the dangers which may arise from a misconception of its true nature.

With counsel and reproof are given the most precious messages of encouragement, presenting the love of God for sinners, the rich experience which it may be ours to obtain in the knowledge of God, and in exemplifying his love and beneficence,—all calculated to strengthen faith, and lead to a closer connection with God. For such an experience there is at this time a special need, that the people of God may be prepared to stand in the fierce conflicts before them, being able to say, as did one who in the earlier days of the Reformation yielded up his life for the truth, "My faith has a confidence in God which will withstand all the power of hell."

Testimony 33 is larger than any preceding number. The pressure of cares and abundant labors has delayed its publication, but by this delay the value of the work has been enhanced through the addition of some articles which would not have appeared in this volume had it been completed earlier.

As in Testimony 32, the letters of the alphabet have been used instead of blanks or initials for the names of persons addressed.

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UNITY AND LOVE IN THE CHURCH.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN HEALDSBURG: Do not forget that the most dangerous snares which Satan has prepared for the church will come through its own members who do not love God supremely or their neighbor as themselves. Satan is continually striving to wedge himself in between brethren. He seeks to gain control of those who claim to believe the truth, but who are unconverted; and when he can influence these, through their own carnal nature, to unite with him in trying to thwart the purposes of God, then he is exultant.

The health institute, the College, the ministry, and the missionary societies, are all instrumentalities which God employs for the accomplishment of his work. If Satan can in any way invent something which will divert talent and means from these instrumentalities into another channel, he will do it. There are some who are deceived in themselves. While flattering themselves that they are doing God's work, they are playing into the hands of the great deceiver, and rendering him effectual service. Beware of these deceptions. Ever remember what is due to our Christian profession as God's peculiar people; and beware lest, in the exercise of personal independence, your influence may work against the purposes of God, and you, through Satan's devices, become a stumbling-block, directly in the way of those who are weak and

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halting. There is danger of giving our enemies occasion to blaspheme God, and heap scorn upon believers in the truth.

Be especially guarded against becoming a tool in the hands of the enemy to divert the minds of any — men and women, or children — from an entire surrender of themselves to God and to the great work for this time. Beware of flattering the young by holding out to them the prospect of financial gain, wonderful educational advantages, or great personal achievements. Flattering words are sweet to the unconsecrated heart, and some who think they are standing firm, are dazed, allured, and intoxicated with hopes that will never be realized. A great wrong has been done in this way. All should think and speak modestly of their own capabilities, and should be careful not to encourage pride and self-esteem in others. Men and women, unless consecrated to God, are weak in moral power, and may be entirely mistaken in their estimate of human ability and of what constitutes Christian fidelity. Present no inducements which will lessen the interest of any in building up an institution which God has said should be built up.

Bro. A does not manifest good judgment upon all occasions and in all matters. He is not well-balanced; and unless he walks in humility before God, he will make dangerous mistakes. He lacks discernment, and therefore misjudges character, using such extravagant words of flattery to some as will hurt their souls. He will lead them to think that they can do some great thing, and thus they will neglect the little duties lying directly in their path.

I do not plead for inactivity, but I plead for this selfish, worldly spirit to be overcome. Any enterprise which will unite the interests of church members, and will bring harmony and unity of effort into the work of God, may be safely entered into. But never, never forget that you are either servants of Jesus Christ, working strenuously for that unity of believers which Christ prayed might exist, or you are working against this unity and against Christ.

Those who seek to lessen the interest of any in the school at Healdsburg, or in the missionary work in any of its branches, are not working together with God, but are working under another captain, whose aim is to weaken and destroy. Your usefulness, brethren and sisters of the Healdsburg church, requires that you be straightforward in all your dealings; that you be humble, holy, and undefiled. There should be less proud self-seeking, less self-importance. When the members of the church are clothed with humility, when they put from them self-esteem and self-seeking, when they seek constantly to do God's will, — then they will work together in harmony. God's Spirit is one. . . .

The crisis is just before us, when each will need much strength from God in order to stand against the wiles of Satan; for his deceptions will come in every conceivable form. Those who have allowed themselves to be the sport of Satan's temptations, will be unprepared then to take the right side. Their ideas will be confused, so that they cannot discern between the divine and the Satanic.

There will come a crisis in every one of our institutions. Influences will be at work against them, from both believers and unbelievers. There must be no betraying of confidence or holy trust now, to benefit or exalt self. We should constantly watch our life with jealous care, lest we leave wrong impressions upon the world. Say it, act it: "I am a Christian. I cannot act upon the world's maxims. I must love God supremely, and my neighbor as myself. I cannot enter into or connive at any arrangement which will interfere in the slightest manner with my usefulness, or weaken my influence, or destroy the confidence of any one in God's instrumentalities.". . .

Remember that God's people are but a little flock compared with the professedly Christian world, and the myriads of world-adoring men and women. They are to be Bible Christians, — examples, to our youth, of righteousness and exactness in all things. Every

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influence surrounding the young should be of a holy character, and this influence should begin in our own families. The sacred and the common should not be commingled.

GUARDING THE INTERESTS OF BRETHREN.

By his baptismal vows, every member of the church has solemnly pledged himself to guard the interests of his brethren. All will be tempted to cling to their own cherished plans and ideas, which appear sound to them; but they should watch and pray, and endeavor, to the utmost of their ability, to build up the kingdom of Jesus in the world. Every Christian is required by God, as far as it is in his power, to ward off from his brethren and sisters every influence which will have the least tendency to divide them or to separate their interests from the work for this present time. He should not only have a regard for his own spiritual interests, but should manifest a burden for the souls of those to whom he stands related; and he should, through Christ, have a constraining power over other members of the church. His words and deportment should have an influence to lead them to follow Christ's example in self-denial, self-sacrifice, and love for others.

If there are any in the church who exert an influence contrary to the love and disinterested benevolence which Jesus manifested for us, if they draw apart from their brethren, faithful men should deal with these cases in wisdom, laboring for their souls, yet being careful that their influence shall not leaven others, and that the church shall not be led astray by their disaffection and false reports. Some are filled with self-sufficiency. There are a few who they think are right, but they question and find fault with every act of others. These persons must not be allowed to imperil the interests of the church. In order to raise the moral tone of the church, each should feel it his duty to seek personal spiritual culture, through the practice of strict Bible principles, as in the sight of a holy God.

Let each church member feel that he himself must be right with God, that he must be sanctified through the truth. Then he can represent Christian character to others, and can set an example of unselfishness. If each will do this, the church will increase in spirituality and in favor with God.

Every church member should feel under obligation to consecrate his tithe to God. None are to follow the sight of their eyes, or the inclination of their selfish hearts, and thus rob God. They should not use their means to gratify vanity, or for any other selfish indulgence; for in so doing they entangle themselves in Satan's snares. God is the giver of tact, of ability to accumulate wealth, and therefore all is to be laid upon his altar. The requirement is, "Honor the Lord with thy substance." The tendency to covetousness must be constantly restrained, else it will eat into the hearts of men and women, and they will run greedily after gain.

In the wilderness of temptation, Satan, the adversary of souls, presented before Christ the glories of this world, and said, "If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." The Saviour repulsed Satan; but how easily is man seduced by the representations of the great enemy! Many are charmed with the attractions of the world; they serve mammon rather than God, and so lose their souls.

In a little while we are to meet our Lord; and what account shall we have to give him of the use we have made of our time, our talents of influence, and our possessions? Our joy should be in the work of saving souls. I solemnly inquire of the Healdsburg church, Is God among you of a truth? Says the True Witness, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy." Are you of this number? Have you held fast your integrity? As drowning men, have you clung to Jesus, who is your refuge? Are you obeying him, living for him, loving him? Is each member pure and holy and undefiled, one in whose mouth there is

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no guile? If so, you are most happy; for you are, in the sight of God, "more precious than fine gold, even . . . than the golden wedge of Ophir." While multitudes are devoted to mammon, and serve not the Holy One of Israel, there are a few who have not defiled their garments, but have kept them unspotted from the world; and these few will be a power. This class will have that faith which works by love, and purifies the soul. They will exemplify lofty Christian principles. They will seek for personal connection with the Source of light, and will endeavor to make constant improvement, cultivating every faculty to its fullest extent. God would have you bring into your life the most unbending uprightness and integrity; this will distinguish you before the world as children of the most high God. Jesus was calm and gentle, not losing his self-command, even when in stormy conflict, amid fiercest elements of opposition.

God says to you who have had great light, "Come up higher." Draw nearer to God and heaven. Go forward. You need faith, an unfeigned love for your brethren, and a deeper interest in them. God has intrusted you with sacred responsibilities. There is a mission-field for every member of the church, where he may exert an influence for good.

Our College is not what it should be, nor what it will be if our brethren and sisters will feel that it is a sacred trust committed to them. If they will elevate the standard of spirituality in the church, if they will set an example of integrity in all their dealings, if all will cultivate godliness and Christian dignity, — then the influence of the College will be wide-spread, and a light will go forth from it with rich blessings. I have seen that if the College is properly conducted, many youth will go forth from it to be active laborers in the cause of God. But let all take heed lest in word or action they cast an influence against it or against the truth, by an unconsecrated life, by evil surmising, or by evil report; for

God will surely mark it against them. The College will always be obliged to struggle against difficulties, because some men lack faith, and are not controlled by the mind of Christ. If Satan can find persons among us who will watch for evil, and speak disparagingly of our institutions, picking up every little unpleasant thing that happens, he is well pleased. He will not cease his efforts to lead persons to depreciate the College because it does not in every particular meet their ideas. If he sees that youth can be benefited, he will press every influence into the church to discourage rather than to strengthen and build up.

That these elements are in Healdsburg as well as in other places, none will deny; and if Satan did not use them, he would use some other influence to the same end. But "woe to that man by whom the offense cometh;" for it were "better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." God has his means of working. Men cannot always discern them, and by attaching so much importance to their own efforts they not only give the Lord no room to work, but are found working against him. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

We are nearing the end of time. Trials will be abundant from without, but let them not come from within the church. Let God's professed people deny self for the truth's sake, for Christ's sake. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Every one who truly loves God, will have the spirit of Christ, and a fervent love for his brethren. The more a person's heart is in communion with God, and the more his affections are cen-

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tered in Christ, the less will he be disturbed by the roughness and hardships he meets in this life. Those who are growing up to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, will become more and more like Christ in character, rising above the disposition to murmur and be discontented. They will despise to be fault-finders.

The church at this time should have the faith once delivered to the saints, which will enable them to say boldly, "God is my helper;" "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." The Lord bids us arise and go forward. Whenever the church at any period have forsaken their sins, and believed and walked in the truth, they have been honored of God. There is in faith and humble obedience a power that the world cannot withstand. The order of God's providence in relation to his people is progression, — continual advancement in the perfection of Christian character, in the way of holiness, rising higher and higher in the clear light and knowledge and love of God, to the very close of time. Oh! why are we ever learning only the first principles of the doctrine of Christ?

The Lord has rich blessings for the church, if its members will seek earnestly to arouse from this perilous lukewarmness. A religion of vanity, words devoid of vitality, a character destitute of moral strength, — these are pointed out in the solemn message addressed by the True Witness to the churches, warning them against pride, worldliness, formalism, and self-sufficiency. To him that says, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," the Lord of heaven declares, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But to the lowly, the suffering, the faithful, the patient, who are alive to their weakness and insufficiency, are given words of encouragement: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with

me." The True Witness says to all, "I know thy works." This close scrutiny is over the churches in California. Nothing escapes His searching gaze; their faults and errors, their neglects and failures, their sinful departure from the truth, their declensions and short-comings, — all are "opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

I hope and pray that you may walk in all lowliness of mind, that you may be a blessing to one another. "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The bridal lamps must be kept trimmed and burning. Our Lord delays because of his long-suffering to us-ward, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." But when we, with all the redeemed, shall stand upon the sea of glass, with harps of gold and crowns of glory, and before us the immensity of eternity, then we shall see how short was the waiting period of probation. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching."

We are living in an age when all should especially give heed to the injunction of the Saviour, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Let every one bear in mind that he should be true and loyal to God, believing the truth, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Saviour's invitation is, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The Lord is willing to help us, to strengthen and bless us; but we must pass through the refining process until all the impurities in our character are burned away. Every member of the church will be subjected to the furnace, not to consume, but to purify.

The Lord has wrought among you, but Satan has also intruded himself, to bring in fanaticism. There are other evils also to be avoided. Some are in danger of being satisfied with the glimpses they have had of the light and love of God, and so ceasing to advance. Watchfulness and prayer have not

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been maintained. At the very time when the acclamation is made, "The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these," temptations come in, and darkness gathers about the soul, — earthliness, selfishness, and self-glorification. There is a necessity for the Lord himself to communicate his own ideas to the soul. What a thought! — that instead of our poor, earthly, contracted ideas and plans, the Lord will communicate to us his own ideas, his own thoughts, noble, broad, far-reaching, always leading heavenward!

Here is your danger, in failing to press forward "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Has the Lord given you light? Then you are responsible for that light; not merely while its rays are shining upon you, but for all which it has revealed to you in the past. You are to surrender your will to God daily; you are to walk in the light, and to expect more; for the light from the dear Saviour is to shine forth in clearer, more distinct rays amid the moral darkness, increasing in brightness more and more unto the perfect day.

Are all the members of your church seeking to gather fresh manna every morning and evening? Are you seeking divine enlightenment? or are you devising means whereby you can glorify yourselves? Are you, with your whole soul, might, mind, and strength, loving and serving God, in blessing others around you by leading them to the Light of the world? Are you satisfied with past blessings? or are you walking as Christ walked, working as he worked, revealing him to the world in your words and actions? Are you, as obedient children, living a pure and holy life? Christ must be brought into your life. He alone can cure you of envy, of evil surmising against your brethren; he alone can take away from you the self-sufficient spirit that some of you cherish, to your own spiritual detriment. Jesus alone can make you feel your weakness, your ignorance, your

corrupt nature. He alone can make you pure, refine you, fit you for the mansions of the blessed.

"Through God we shall do valiantly." What an amount of good you can do by being loyal to God and to your brethren, by repressing every unkind thought, every feeling of envy or self-importance! Let your life be filled with the ministry of kindness to others. How soon you may be called to lay off the armor, you know not. Death may claim you suddenly, giving you no time to prepare for your last change, no physical strength or mental power to fix your thoughts on God and make your peace with him. Some, ere long, will know by experience how vain is the help of man, how worthless is the self-important, self-sufficient righteousness which has satisfied them.

I feel urged by the Spirit of the Lord to tell you that now is your day of privilege, of trust, of blessing. Will you improve it? Are you working for the glory of God, or for selfish interests? Are you keeping before your mind's eye brilliant prospects of worldly success, whereby you may obtain self-gratification and financial gain? If so, you will be most bitterly disappointed. But if you seek to live a pure and holy life, to learn daily in the school of Christ the lessons that he has invited you to learn, to be meek and lowly in heart, then you have a peace which no worldly circumstances can change.

A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. Uneasiness, dissatisfaction, and restlessness reveal the absence of the Saviour. If Jesus is brought into the life, that life will be filled with good and noble works for the Master. You will forget to be self-serving, and will live closer and still closer to the dear Saviour; your character will become Christlike, and all around you will take knowledge that you have been with Jesus and learned of him. Each one possesses in himself the source of his own happiness or wretchedness. If he will, he may rise above the low, sentimental feeling which makes up the experience of many; but so long

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as he is self-inflated, the Lord can do nothing for him. Satan will present ambitious projects to daze the senses, but we must ever keep before us "the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Crowd all the good works you possibly can into this life. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

If our lives are filled with holy fragrance, if we honor God by having good thoughts toward others, and good deeds to bless others, it matters not whether we live in a cottage or a palace. Circumstances have but little to do with the experiences of the soul. It is the spirit cherished which gives coloring to all our actions. A man at peace with God and his fellow-men cannot be made miserable. Envy will not be in his heart; evil surmising will find no room there; hatred cannot exist. The heart in harmony with God is lifted above the annoyances and trials of this life. But a heart where the peace of Christ is not, is unhappy, full of discontent; the person sees defects in everything, and he would bring discord into the most heavenly music. A life of selfishness is a life of evil. Those whose hearts are filled with love of self will store away evil thoughts of their brethren, and will talk against God's instrumentalities. Passions kept warm and fierce by Satan's promptings, are a bitter fountain, ever sending forth bitter streams to poison the life of others. . . .

Let each one who claims to follow Christ, esteem himself less, and others more. Press together, press together! In union there is strength and victory; in discord and division there is weakness and defeat. These words have been spoken to me from heaven. As God's ambassador, I speak them to you.

Let every one seek to answer the prayer of Christ, —"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee." O, what unity is this! and says Christ, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

When death claims one of our number, what are our memories of the treatment he has received? Are the pictures upon memory's walls pleasant to reflect upon? Are they memories of kind words spoken, of sympathy given at the right time? Have his brethren turned away the evil surmisings of indiscreet meddlers? Have they vindicated his cause? Have they been faithful to the inspired injunction, "Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak"? "Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands." "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not."

When he with whom we have associated in the church is dead, when we know that his account in the books of heaven is fixed, and that he must meet that record in the Judgment, what are the reflections of his brethren as to the course they have pursued toward him? What has been their influence upon him? How clearly now every harsh word, every unadvised act, is called to mind! How differently they would conduct themselves if they had another trial!

The apostle Paul thanked God for the comfort given him in sorrow, saying, "Blessed be . . . the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." As Paul felt the comfort and warmth of God's love breaking into his soul, he reflected the blessing upon others. Let us so order our conduct that the pictures hung upon the walls of our memory may not be of such a character that we cannot endure to reflect upon them.

After those with whom we associate are dead,

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there will never be an opportunity to recall any word spoken to them, or to wipe from the memory any painful impression. Then let us take heed to our ways, that we do not offend God with our lips. Let all coldness and variance be put away. Let the heart melt into tenderness before God, as we recall his merciful dealings with us. Let the Spirit of God, like a holy flame, burn away the rubbish that is piled up at the door of the heart, and let Jesus in; then his love will flow out to others through us, in tender words and thoughts and acts. Then if death parts us from our friends, to meet no more till we stand at the bar of God, we shall not be ashamed to have the record of our words appear.

When death closes the eyes, when the hands are folded upon the silent breast, how quickly feelings of variance change! There is no grudging, no bitterness; slights and wrongs are forgiven, forgotten. How many loving words are spoken of the dead! How many good things in their life are brought to mind! Praise and commendation are now freely expressed; but they fall upon ears that hear not, hearts that feel not. Had these words been spoken when the weary spirit needed them so much, when the ear could hear and the heart could feel, what a pleasant picture would have been left in the memory! How many, as they stand, awed and silent, beside the dead, recall with shame and sorrow the words and acts that brought sadness to the heart now forever still! Let us now bring all the beauty, love, and kindness we can into our life. Let us be thoughtful, grateful, patient, and forbearing in our intercourse with one another. Let the thoughts and feelings which find expression around the dying and the dead, be brought into the daily association with our brethren and sisters in life.

BEHAVIOR IN THE HOUSE OF GOD.

To the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ's representatives, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defileth.

From the sacredness which was attached to the earthly sanctuary, Christians may learn how they should regard the place where the Lord meets with his people. There has been a great change, not for the better, but for the worse, in the habits and customs of the people in reference to religious worship. The precious, the sacred things which connect us with God, are fast losing their hold upon our minds and hearts, and are being brought down to the level of common things. The reverence which the people had anciently for the sanctuary where they met with God in sacred service, has largely passed away. Nevertheless, God himself gave the order of his service, exalting it high above everything of a temporal nature.

The house is the sanctuary for the family, and the closet or the grove the most retired place for individual worship; but the church is the sanctuary for the congregation. There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping. Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference. In order that men may do their best work in showing forth the praises of God, their associations must be such as will keep the sacred distinct from the common, in their minds. Those who have broad ideas, noble thoughts and aspirations, are those who have associations that strengthen all thoughts of divine things. Happy are those who have a sanctuary, be it high or low, in the city or among the rugged mountain caves, in the lowly

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cabin or in the wilderness. If it is the best they can secure for the Master, he will hallow the place with his presence, and it will be holy unto the Lord of hosts.

When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. If there is a stove in the room, it is not proper to crowd about it in an indolent, careless attitude. Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers.

If some have to wait a few minutes before the meeting begins, let them maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special benefit to their own hearts, and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls. They should remember that heavenly messengers are in the house. We all lose much sweet communion with God by our restlessness, by not encouraging moments of reflection and prayer. The spiritual condition needs to be often reviewed, and the mind and heart drawn toward the Sun of Righteousness. If when the people come into the house of worship, they have genuine reverence for the Lord, and bear in mind that they are in his presence, there will be a sweet eloquence in silence. The whispering and laughing and talking which might be without sin in a common business place, should find no sanction in the house where God is worshiped. The mind should be prepared to hear the word of God, that it may have due weight, and suitably impress the heart.

When the minister enters, it should be with dignified, solemn mien. He should bow down in silent prayer as soon as he steps into the pulpit, and earnestly ask help of God. What an impression this will make! There will be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God; he is committing himself to God before he dares to stand before

the people. Solemnity rests upon all, and angels of God are brought very near. Every one of the congregation, also, who fears God, should with bowed head unite in silent prayer with him, that God may grace the meeting with his presence, and give power to his truth proclaimed from human lips. When the meeting is opened by prayer, every knee should bow in the presence of the Holy One, and every heart should ascend to God in silent devotion. The prayers of faithful worshipers will be heard, and the ministry of the word will prove effectual. The lifeless attitude of the worshipers in the house of God is one great reason why the ministry is not more productive of good. The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God's instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies.

When the word is spoken, you should remember, brethren, that you are listening to the voice of God through his delegated servant. Listen attentively. Sleep not for one instant, because by this slumber you may lose the very words that you need most,—the very words which, if heeded, would save your feet from straying into wrong paths. Satan and his angels are busy creating a paralyzed condition of the senses, so that cautions, warnings, and reproofs shall not be heard; or if heard, that they shall not take effect upon the heart, and reform the life. Sometimes a little child may so attract the attention of the hearers that the precious seed does not fall into good ground, and bring forth fruit. Sometimes young men and women have so little reverence for the house and worship of God that they keep up a continual communication with each other during the sermon. Could these see the angels of God looking upon them, and marking their doings, they would be filled with shame, with abhorrence of themselves. God wants attentive hearers. It was while men slept that Satan sowed his tares.

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When the benediction is pronounced, all should still be quiet, as if fearful of losing the peace of Christ. Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling that they are in the presence of God, that his eye is resting upon them, and they must act as in his visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends, and visit and introduce common thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places.

Parents, elevate the standard of Christianity in the minds of your children; help them to weave Jesus into their experience; teach them to have the highest reverence for the house of God, and to understand that when they enter the Lord's house, it should be with hearts that are softened and subdued by such thoughts as these: "God is here; this is his house. I must have pure thoughts and the holiest motives. I must have no pride, envy, jealousy, evil surmising, hatred, or deception in my heart; for I am coming into the presence of the holy God. This is the place where God meets with and blesses his people. The high and holy One who inhabiteth eternity looks upon me, searches my heart, and reads the most secret thoughts and acts of my life."

Brethren, will you not devote a little thought to this subject, and notice how you conduct yourselves in the house of God, and what efforts you are making by precept and example to cultivate reverence in your children? You roll vast responsibilities upon the preacher, and hold him accountable for the souls of your children, but you do not sense your own responsibility as parents and as instructors, and, like Abraham, command your household after you, that they may keep the statutes of the Lord. Your sons and daughters are corrupted by your own example

and lax precepts; and notwithstanding this lack of domestic training, you expect the minister to counteract your daily work, and accomplish the wonderful achievement of training their hearts and lives to virtue and piety. After the minister has done all he can do for the church by faithful, affectionate admonition, patient discipline, and fervent prayer to reclaim and save the soul, yet is not successful, the fathers and mothers often blame him because their children are not converted, when it may be because of their own neglect. The burden rests with the parents; and will they take up the work that God has intrusted to them, and with fidelity perform it? Will they move onward and upward, working in a humble, patient, persevering way, to reach the exalted standard themselves, and to bring their children up with them? No wonder our churches are feeble, and do not have that deep, earnest piety in their borders that they should have. Our present habits and customs, which dishonor God, and bring the sacred and heavenly down to the level of the common, are against us. We have a sacred, testing, sanctifying truth; and if our habits and practices are not in accordance with the truth, we are sinners against great light, and are proportionately guilty. It will be far more tolerable for the heathen in the day of God's retributive justice than for us.

A much greater work might be done than we are now doing in reflecting the light of truth. God expects us to bear much fruit. He expects greater zeal and faithfulness, more affectionate and earnest efforts, by the individual members of the church for their neighbors, and for those who are out of Christ. Parents must begin their work on a high plane of action. All who name the name of Christ must put on the whole armor, and entreat, warn, and seek to win souls from sin. Lead all you can to listen to the truth in the house of God. We must do much more than we are doing to snatch souls from the burning.

It is too true that reverence for the house of God has

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become almost extinct. Sacred things and places are not discerned; the holy and exalted are not appreciated. Is there not a cause for the want of fervent piety in our families? Is it not because the high standard of religion is left to trail in the dust? God gave rules of order, perfect and exact, to his ancient people. Has his character changed? Is he not the great and mighty God who rules in the heaven of heavens? Would it not be well for us often to read the directions given by God himself to the Hebrews, that we who have the light of the glorious truth shining upon us, may imitate their reverence for the house of God? We have abundant reason to maintain a fervent, devoted spirit in the worship of God. We have reason even to be more thoughtful and reverential in our worship than had the Jews. But an enemy has been at work to destroy our faith in the sacredness of Christian worship.

The place dedicated to God should not be a room where worldly business is transacted. If the children assemble to worship God in a room that is used during the week for a school or a store-room, they will be more than human if, mingled with their devotional thoughts, they do not also have thoughts of their studies, or of things that have happened during the week. The education and training of the youth should be of a character that would exalt sacred things, and encourage pure devotion for God in his house. Many who profess to be children of the heavenly King, have no true appreciation of the sacredness of eternal things. Nearly all need to be taught how to conduct themselves in the house of God. Parents should not only teach, but command, their children to enter the sanctuary with sobriety and reverence.

The moral taste of the worshipers in God's holy sanctuary must be elevated, refined, sanctified. This matter has been sadly neglected. Its importance has been overlooked, and as the result, disorder and irreverence have become prevalent, and God has been

dishonored. When the leaders in the church, ministers and people, fathers and mothers, have not had elevated views of this matter, what could be expected of the inexperienced children? They are too often found in groups, away from the parents, who should have charge of them. Notwithstanding they are in the presence of God, and his eye is looking upon them, they are light and trifling, they whisper and laugh, are careless, irreverent, and inattentive. They are seldom instructed that the minister is God's ambassador, that the message he brings is one of God's appointed agencies in the salvation of souls, and that to all who have the privilege brought within their reach, it will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

The delicate and susceptible minds of the youth obtain their estimate of the labors of God's servants by the way their parents treat the matter. Many heads of families make the service a subject of criticism at home, approving a few things and condemning others. Thus the message of God to men is criticised and questioned, and made a subject of levity. What impressions are thus made upon the young by these careless, irreverent remarks, the books of heaven alone will reveal. The children see and understand these things very much quicker than parents are apt to think. Their moral senses receive a wrong bias, that time will never fully change. The parents mourn over the hardness of heart in their children, and the difficulty in arousing their moral sensibility to answer to the claims of God. But the books of heavenly record trace with unerring pen the true cause. The parents were unconverted. They were not in harmony with Heaven or with Heaven's work. Their low, common ideas of the sacredness of the ministry and of the sanctuary of God were woven into the education of their children. It is a question whether any one who has for years been under this blighting influence of home instruction, will ever have a sensitive reverence and high regard for

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God's ministry, and the agencies he has appointed for the salvation of souls. These things should be spoken of with reverence, with propriety of language, and with fine susceptibility, that you may reveal to all you associate with that you regard the message from God's servants as a message to you from God himself.

Parents, be careful what example and what ideas you give your children. Their minds are plastic, and impressions are easily made. In regard to the service of the sanctuary, if the speaker has a blemish, be afraid to mention it. Talk only of the good work he is doing, of the good ideas he presented, which you should heed as coming through God's agent. It may be readily seen why children are so little impressed with the ministry of the word, and why they have so little reverence for the house of God. Their education has been defective in this respect. Their parents need daily communion with God. Their own ideas need to be refined and ennobled; their lips need to be touched with a live coal from off the altar; then their habits, their practices at home, will make a good impression on the minds and characters of their children. The standard of religion will be greatly elevated. Such parents will do a great work for God. They will have less earthliness, less sensuality, and more refinement and fidelity at home. Life will be invested with a solemnity of which they have scarcely conceived. Nothing will be made common that pertains to the service and worship of God.

I am often pained as I enter the house where God is worshiped, to see the untidy dress of both men and women. If the heart and character were indicated by the outward apparel, then certainly nothing could be heavenly about them. They have no true idea of the order, the neatness, and the refined deportment that God requires of all who come into his presence to worship him. What impressions do these things give to unbelievers and to the youth, who are keen to discern and to draw their conclusions?

In the minds of many, there are no more sacred thoughts connected with the house of God than with the most common place. Some will enter the place of worship with their hats on, in soiled, dirty clothes. Such do not realize that they are to meet with God and holy angels. There should be a radical change in this matter all through our churches. Ministers themselves need to elevate their ideas, to have finer susceptibilities in regard to it. It is a feature of the work that has been sadly neglected. Because of the irreverence in attitude, dress, and deportment, and lack of a worshipful frame of mind, God has often turned his face away from those assembled for his worship.

All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to him. The parading of bows and ribbons, ruffles and feathers, and gold and silver ornaments, is a species of idolatry, and is wholly inappropriate for the sacred service of God, where the eye of every worshiper should be single to his glory. All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject. When they see their children inclined to follow worldly fashions, they should, like Abraham, resolutely command their households after them. Instead of uniting them with the world, connect them with God. Let none dishonor God's sanctuary by their showy apparel. God

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and angels are there. The Holy One of Israel has spoken through his apostle: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

When a church has been raised up and left uninstructed on these points, the minister has neglected his duty, and will have to give an account to God for the impressions he allowed to prevail. Unless correct ideas of true worship and true reverence are impressed upon the people, there will be a growing tendency to place the sacred and eternal on a level with common things, and those professing the truth will be an offense to God and a disgrace to religion. They can never, with their uncultivated ideas, appreciate a pure and holy heaven, and be prepared to join with the worshipers in the heavenly courts above, where all is purity and perfection, where every being has perfect reverence for God and his holiness.

Paul describes the work of God's ambassadors as that by which every man shall be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. Those who embrace the truth of heavenly origin, should be refined, ennobled, sanctified through it. It will require much painstaking effort to reach God's standard of true manhood. The irregular stones hewed from the quarry must be chiseled, their rough sides must be polished. This is an age famous for surface work, for easy methods, for boasted holiness aside from the standard of character that God has erected. All short routes, all cut-off tracks, all teaching which fails to exalt the law of God as the standard of religious character, is spurious. Perfection of character is a life-long work, unattainable by those who are not willing to strive for it in God's appointed way, by slow and toilsome steps. We cannot afford to make any mistake in this matter, but we want day by day to be growing up into Christ, our living head.

RELIGION AND SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER B: You have both been presented before me as in danger spiritually. You were leaving the right path, and were placing your feet in a broader road. Sister B was saying many things, in jots and tittles, here a little and there a little, which were as seed sown, and the harvest will surely come. She was encouraging unbelief, and telling her husband that the road they had been traveling was altogether too narrow and lowly. She thought that her husband's qualifications were of a high order, and should be exercised in a broader and more influential manner. Bro. B was of the very same mind; in fact, he had led her into this train of thought. You both held the banner upon which was inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus;" but as you met in your way with people whom you thought were popular, down came the banner, and you put it behind your backs, saying, "If we let it be known that we are Seventh-day Adventists, then our influence will be at an end, and we shall lose many advantages." I saw the banner of truth trailing behind you. Then the question arose, "Why carry it at all? We can believe that which we see to be truth, but we need not let the educators and students know that we bear this unpopular banner." There were those in your company who were not pleased or satisfied with these suggestions; but they weakly followed your influence, in place of letting their light shine by holding aloft their standard. They hid their banners and marched on, fearing to let the light which was given them of Heaven, shine before all.

I saw one approaching you with firm tread and grieved countenance. He said, "Let no man take your crown." Have you forgotten the humiliation endured by the Son of God in coming to our world,—how he suffered abuse, reproach, insult, hatred, mock-

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ery, and betrayal,—how he endured the shameful trial in the judgment-hall, after having suffered the superhuman assaults of Satan in the garden of Gethsemane? Have you forgotten the wild cry from the mob, "Crucify him, crucify him!" and how he died as a malefactor? Is the servant greater than his Lord? The followers of Jesus will not be popular, but will be like their Master, meek and lowly of heart. You are seeking to climb to the highest seat, but will find yourselves at last in the lowest. If you seek to deal justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God, you will be partakers with Christ of his sufferings, and sharers with him of his glory in his kingdom. The Lord has blessed you, but how little have you appreciated his loving-kindness! How little praise he has received from your lips! You may do a good work for the Master, but not with *your* ideas as supreme. You must learn in the school of Christ, else you can never be qualified to enter the higher grade, receive the seal of the living God, enter in through the gates into the city of God, and be crowned with glory, honor, and immortality.

Satan works in many ways where he is not discerned, even through men and women who are in positions of trust. He will suggest to their minds plausible errors of thought and action and speech, that will create doubt and work distrust where they think there is assurance of safety. He will work upon dissatisfied elements, to put them in active operation. There will be a desire for greatness and honor. Envy will be excited in minds where it is not supposed to exist, and circumstances will not be wanting to call it into action. Doubts will be raised, and flattering promises of gain will be offered, if the cross is not made so prominent. Satan will tempt some to think that our faith stands as a barrier to great advancement, and bars the way to reaching a high worldly position, and being called remarkable men and women.

In his first display of disaffection, Satan was very cunning. All he claimed was, that he wanted to bring in a

better order of things, to make great improvements. He led the holy pair away from God, away from their allegiance to his commandments, on the same point where thousands are tempted to-day, and where thousands fall, that is, by their vain imaginings. True knowledge is divine. Satan insinuated into the minds of our first parents a desire for a speculative knowledge, whereby he declared they would greatly improve their condition; but in order to gain this, they must take a course contrary to God's holy will; for God would not lead them to the greatest hights. It was not God's purpose that they should obtain knowledge that had its foundation in disobedience. This was a broad field into which Satan was seeking to lead Adam and Eve, and it is the same field that he opens for the world to-day by his temptations.

You were presenting the idea that education must stand as an independent work. This mixing of religious matters and Bible doctrines with scientific education, you considered as a drawback in our educational work, and as a hinderance in the work of carrying the students to the higher degrees of scientific knowledge.

The great reason why so few of the world's great men, and those having a college education, are led to obey the commandments of God, is because they have separated education from religion, thinking that each should occupy a field by itself. God presented a field large enough to perfect the knowledge of all who should enter it. This knowledge was obtained under divine supervision; it was bound about with the immutable law of Jehovah, and the result would have been perfect blessedness.

God did not create evil, he only made the good, which was like himself. But Satan would not be content to know the will of God and do it. His curiosity was on the stretch to know that which God had not designed he should know. Evil, sin, and death were not created by God; they are the result of disobedience, which originated in Satan. But the

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knowledge of evil now in the world was brought in through the cunning of Satan. These are very hard and expensive lessons, but men will learn them, and many will never be convinced that it is bliss to be ignorant of a certain kind of knowledge, which arises from unsatisfied desires and unholy aims. The sons and daughters of Adam are fully as inquisitive and presumptuous as was Eve in seeking forbidden knowledge. They gain an experience, a knowledge, which God never designed they should have, and the result will be, as it was to our first parents, the loss of their Eden home. When will human beings learn that which is demonstrated so thoroughly before them?

The history of the past shows an active, working devil. He can no more be idle than harmless. Satan was found in only one tree to endanger the safety of Adam and Eve. He planned to attract the holy pair to that one tree, that they might do the very thing God had said they should not do — eat of the tree of knowledge. There was no danger to them in approaching any other tree. How plausible his speech! He laid hold of the very arguments which he uses to-day, — flattery, envy, distrust, questioning, and unbelief. If Satan was so cunning at first, what must he be now, after gaining an experience of many thousands of years? Yet God and holy angels, and all those who abide in obedience to all the Lord's expressed will, are wiser than he. The subtlety of Satan will not decrease, but the wisdom given to men through a living connection with the Source of all light and divine knowledge, will be proportionate to his arts and wiles.

If men would stand the test which Adam failed to endure, and would, in the strength of Jesus, obey all the requirements of God, because they are righteousness, then they would never become acquainted with the objectionable knowledge. God never designed that men should have this knowledge which comes of disobedience, and which, carried into practice, ends

in eternal death. When men almost invariably choose the knowledge that Satan presents; when their taste is so perverted that it craves that knowledge as though it were a fountain of supreme wisdom, then they give evidence that they are separated from God, and are in rebellion against Christ.

THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN.

DEAR SISTER C: If God, in his providence, has established a school among our own people in ——, and if in place of sending your daughter where she would be in the society and under the influence of those who love the truth, you place her in —— Seminary, where she will be associated with a worldly class, who have no respect for God or his law, I ask you, how you expect the Lord will work to counteract the evil influence that must surround her, and which you have voluntarily chosen. Will he commission his angels to do the work which he has left for you to do? God does not work in that way; he expects us to follow the light he has given in his word.

When God was about to smite the first-born of Egypt, he commanded the Israelites to gather their children from among the Egyptians into their own dwellings, and strike their door posts with blood, that the destroying angel might see it, and pass over their homes. It was the work of parents to gather in their children. This is your work, this is my work, and the work of every mother who believes the truth. The angel is to place a mark upon the forehead of all who are separated from sin and sinners, and the destroying angel will follow, to slay utterly both old and young.

God is not pleased with our inattention and trifling with his blessings placed within our reach. Neither is he pleased to have us place our children in worldly society, because this best suits their tastes

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and inclinations. If the souls of your children are saved, you must do your work with fidelity. God has not been wholly pleased with your course in regard to worldly associations, and now the peril is revealed. You have also encouraged the reading of story-books; these, and papers with continued stories, lying upon your table, have educated the taste of your daughter until she is a mental inebriate, and needs a stronger power, a firmer will than her own, to control her.

The enemy has had his way with your daughter until his toils have bound her about like bands of steel, and it will require a strong, persevering effort to save her soul. If you have success in this case, there must be no half-way work. The habits of years cannot easily be broken. She should be placed where a steady, firm, abiding influence is constantly exercised. I would advise you to put her in the college at ——; let her have the discipline of the boarding-house. It is where she ought to have been years ago. The boarding-house is conducted upon a plan that makes it a good home. This home may not suit the inclinations of some, but it is because they have been educated to false theories, to self-indulgence and self-gratification, and all their habits and customs have been in a wrong channel. But, my dear sister, we are nearing the end of time, and we want now, not to meet the world's tastes and practices, but to meet the mind of God; to see what saith the Scriptures, and then to walk according to the light which God has given us. Our inclinations, our customs and practices, are not to have the preference. God's word is our standard.

So far as your daughter's health is concerned, right habits will secure to her health, while wrong habits will ruin her for this life and for the future, immortal life. There is a heaven to gain, a perdition to shun; and when you in the fear of God have done all that you can do on your part, then you may expect that the Lord will do his part. Decisive action now may save a soul from death.

Your daughter needs a strong influence to counteract that of the society she loves. It will take just as decided efforts to cure her of this mental disorder as it does to cure the drunkard of his craving for liquor. You have a work to do which no other can do for you, and will you fail to do it? Will you in the name of the Lord deal with your child as with a soul in danger of eternal ruin? Were she a girl who loved God, one who could exercise self-control, her peril would not be so great. But she does not love to think of God, of her duty, or of heaven. She persists in having her own way. She does not daily seek strength from God, that she may resist temptation. Will you, then, place her in connection with influences calculated to lead her thoughts away from God, away from the truth, and from righteousness? If so, you place her on the enemy's battle ground, with no strength to resist his power, or to overcome his temptations.

If she were situated where there were heavenly and divine influences, her moral sensibilities, which are now paralyzed, might be aroused, and her thoughts and purposes, by the blessing of God, might be changed to flow in the heavenly channel, and she be restored. But she is now in danger through inward corruption and outward temptation. Satan is playing the game of life for her soul, and he has every advantage for winning the game.

In my dreams, I have been talking to you as I have here written. My heart yearns over you with intensity. Trying as your case now is, do not despond. You need cheerfulness and decision. Seek for help from God. God is your friend. You are never alone. The Bible is your counselor. It is a light to them who are in darkness. Be steadfast in the hour of trial, for you will have new trials to meet. But cling to Jesus, and make him your strength.

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DANGERS OF THE YOUNG.

BROTHER D: My prayers are ascending to God for you, and my love for your soul leads me to write to you again. I feel deeply grieved over your case, not that I look upon you as persecuted, but as a deceived, misguided man, who has not Christ's likeness in his soul, and who is deceiving himself to his certain ruin.

If you had the cause of God at heart, you would see that your brethren have done only their duty in their action toward you. You speak of going to ——, and showing that you can be a man. All that is asked of you by those in responsible places at the Office is, that you show yourself a man just where you are; that you do not degrade yourself by associating with sinners; and that you do not unite with them in evil practices. Cease sympathizing with yourself, and remember the world's Redeemer. Consider the infinite sacrifice he has made in behalf of man, and then think of his disappointment, — that, after he has made such a sacrifice in man's behalf, man should choose to ally himself with those who hate Christ and righteousness, and should become one with them in the indulgence of perverted appetite, thus bringing eternal ruin to his soul.

But you have heard me say all these things; you have read them, as I have written to you, and yet they have not affected your heart and life. You have set your heart against good, and opened it to evil. You have placed yourself in the enemy's way, and have had no hold upon God to enable you to resist his temptations. Suppose you do sever all connection with —— through a revengeful spirit, because your brethren have told you the truth; who will it injure, yourself or them? You will grieve them by so doing, but the work will go on just the same. God is raising up workers on every hand; he is not dependent on you or any other man to do his work.

If your heart is not pure, if your hands are not clean in his sight, he cannot work with you. He wants you to have truth in your heart and life, — interwoven with your character.

I counsel you to humble your heart and confess your wrongs. Consider the solemn charge David gave to Solomon on his dying bed: "I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself." Take this charge to your own heart. Let no one flatter you in wrong-doing. While it is a disgrace to sin, it is no disgrace, but rather an honor, to confess one's sins. Maintain true individuality, and cultivate manly dignity. Put away pride, self-conceit, and false dignity; for these can be maintained only at the most terrible consequences to yourself.

It is not the boisterous song, the merry company, or the stimulating drink that can make you a man in the sight of God, or cheer your heart in sickness and sorrow. True religion alone can be your solace and comfort in trouble. The discipline you received at the Office has not been more close and severe than God's word has imposed upon you. Will you call God unjust? Will you tell him to his face that he is arbitrary because he declares that the wrong-doer shall be separated from his presence?

How plainly the picture is drawn in the word of God, of his dealing with the man who accepted his invitation to the wedding, but who did not put on the wedding garment which had been purchased for him, — the robe of Christ's righteousness! He thought his own defiled garments good enough to come into the presence of Christ; but he was cast out as one who had insulted his Lord, and abused his gracious benevolence.

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My brother, your righteousness will not be sufficient. You must put on the robe of Christ's righteousness. You must be like Christ. Consider the severe test that Christ endured in the wilderness of temptation on the point of appetite. He was emaciated by that long abstinence on your account and on mine; he fought and conquered Satan, that he might give us vantage-ground, bringing us divine strength to conquer appetite and every unholy passion.

I ask you to look at this matter as it is. When you unite with the despisers of God in drinking beer or wine or stronger drink, imagine Jesus before you, suffering the keenest pangs of hunger that he may break the power of Satan, and make it possible for man to conquer in his own behalf. Remember, when, with the godless who reject the truth and refuse salvation, you are lifting the mug of foaming beer, that Jesus is there looking on, even that Jesus whom you claim as your Saviour, in whom your hopes of eternal life are centered. Oh, how can you, how can you be so weak in moral perception as not to see the influence of these things upon yourself and others! You violate the most solemn pledge, and then talk of being persecuted!

When those who feel compelled to do something to break the power that Satan is exerting over our youth, tell you in sorrow that if you do not change your habits, they cannot retain you in connection with the work of God as a translator, how can you stand before them defiantly, without any evidence of sorrow for your course? How does that Saviour who gave his life for you regard your attitude? And yet you think you are persecuted. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." When you stand before this grand and awful tribunal, from whose decisions there will be no appeal, and where there will be no misinterpretation, no misconception, then you will be silent. You will not have one word to say in vindication of your course.

You will stand guilty, condemned, and hopeless, unless you now put away your sins, make diligent work of repentance, and clothe yourself in the robe of Christ's righteousness.

What other course could have been pursued toward you than has been taken? I have the tenderest feelings of pity and love for your soul; but false words of sympathy to sustain you in rebellion and in defiance of those whom God has placed in responsible positions in his work, shall never be uttered by me. I have too much regard for you to tell you, as some will surely do, that it will be well with you when you are taking such a course, — disgracing your manhood, defacing the moral image of God in your soul, deceiving your own heart, and dishonoring him who redeemed you with the price of his own blood.

Christ has said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Are you overcoming? or are you being overcome by your own lusts and appetites and passions?

In order to be safely trusted with the translation of our most important works, to handle sacred things, ought you not to have the fullest connection with God, and complete consecration to his service? Ought you not to be where you can have the holy angels to minister to you, to give you wisdom and knowledge as God gave to Daniel, to inspire you to give the correct ideas, in order that you may do the work of translating correctly? If you choose to open your heart to Satan's suggestions, if you choose the society of those who are the enemies of Christ, do you expect God to work a miracle to keep you from yielding to Satan's power? Evil angels are gathering about your soul; but they are invited guests. They make propositions, and you accept them. Until you have the resolution to obey God's will, you cannot have his guidance.

Jesus expects all who claim to be his soldiers, to

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do service for him. He expects you to recognize the enemy, and to resist him, not to invite him to your confidence, and thus betray sacred trust. The Lord has placed you in a position where you may be elevated and ennobled, and be constantly gaining fitness for his work. If you do not obtain these qualifications, you alone are to blame.

There are three ways in which the Lord reveals his will to us, to guide us, and to fit us to guide others. How may we know his voice from that of a stranger? How shall we distinguish it from the voice of a false shepherd? God reveals his will to us in his word, the Holy Scriptures. His voice is also revealed in his providential workings; and it will be recognized if we do not separate our souls from him by walking in our own ways, doing according to our own wills, and following the promptings of an unsanctified heart, until the senses have become so confused that eternal things are not discerned, and the voice of Satan is so disguised that it is accepted as the voice of God.

Another way in which God's voice is heard, is through the appeals of his Holy Spirit, making impressions upon the heart, which will be wrought out in the character. If you are in doubt upon any subject, you must first consult the Scriptures. If you have truly begun the life of faith, you have given yourself to the Lord, to be wholly his, and he has taken you to mold and fashion according to his purpose, that you may be a vessel unto honor. You should have an earnest desire to be pliable in his hands, and to follow whithersoever he may lead you. You are then trusting him to work out his designs, while at the same time you are co-operating with him by working out your own salvation with fear and trembling. You, my brother, will find difficulty here, because you have not yet learned by experience to know the voice of the Good Shepherd, and this places you in doubt and peril. You ought to be able to distinguish his voice.

THE EXERCISE OF THE WILL.

Pure religion has to do with the will. The will is the governing power in the nature of man, bringing all the other faculties under its sway. The will is not the taste or the inclination, but it is the deciding power, which works in the children of men unto obedience to God, or unto disobedience.

You are a young man of intelligence; you desire to make your life such as will fit you for heaven at last. You are often discouraged at finding yourself weak in moral power, in slavery to doubt, and controlled by the habits and customs of your old life in sin. You find your emotional nature untrue to yourself, to your best resolutions, and to your most solemn pledges. Nothing seems real. Your own instability leads you to doubt the sincerity of those who would do you good. The more you struggle in doubt, the more unreal everything looks to you, until it seems that there is no solid ground for you anywhere. Your promises are like ropes of sand, and you regard in the same unreal light the words and works of those in whom you should trust.

You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises or your faith are of no value until you put your will on the side of faith and action. If you fight the fight of faith with all your will-power, you will conquer. Your feelings, your impressions, your emotions, are not to be trusted, for they are not reliable, especially with your perverted ideas; and the knowledge of your broken promises and your forfeited pledges weakens your confidence in yourself, and the faith of others in you.

But you need not despair. You must be determined to believe, although nothing seems true and real to you. I need not tell you it is yourself that has brought you into this unenviable position. You must win back your confidence in God and in

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your brethren. It is for you to yield up your will to the will of Jesus Christ; and as you do this, God will immediately take possession, and work in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. Your whole nature will then be brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ; and even your thoughts will be subject to him. You cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, but you can control the will, and you can make an entire change in your life. By yielding up your will to Christ, your life will be hid with Christ in God, and allied to the power which is above all principalities and powers. You will have strength from God that will hold you fast to his strength; and a new light, even the light of living faith, will be possible to you. But your will must cooperate with God's will, not with the will of associates through whom Satan is constantly working to ensnare and destroy you.

Will you not, without delay, place yourself in right relation to God? Will you not say, "I will give my will to Jesus, and I will do it now," and from this moment be wholly on the Lord's side? Disregard custom, and the strong clamoring of appetite and passion. Give Satan no chance to say, "You are a wretched hypocrite." Close the door, so that Satan will not thus accuse and dishearten you. Say, "I will believe, I do believe that God is my helper," and you will find that you are triumphant in God. By steadfastly keeping the will on the Lord's side, every emotion will be brought into captivity to the will of Jesus. You will then find your feet on solid rock. It will take, at times, every particle of will-power which you possess, but it is God that is working for you, and you will come forth from the molding process a vessel unto honor.

Talk faith. Keep on God's side of the line. Set not your foot on the enemy's side, and the Lord will be your helper. He will do for you that which it is not possible for you to do for yourself. The result will be that you will become like a "cedar of

Lebanon." Your life will be noble, and your works will be wrought in God. There will be in you a power, an earnestness, and a simplicity that will make you a polished instrument in the hands of God.

You need to drink daily at the fountain of truth, that you may understand the secret of pleasure and joy in the Lord. But you must remember that your will is the spring of all your actions. This will, that forms so important a factor in the character of man, was at the fall given into the control of Satan; and he has ever since been working in man to will and to do of his own pleasure, but to the utter ruin and misery of man. But the infinite sacrifice of God in giving Jesus, his beloved Son, to become a sacrifice for sin, enables him to say, without violating one principle of his government, "Yield yourself up to me; give me that will; take it from the control of Satan, and I will take possession of it; then I can work in you to will and to do of my good pleasure." When he gives you the mind of Christ, your will becomes as his will, and your character is transformed to be like Christ's character. Is it your purpose to do God's will? Do you wish to obey the Scriptures? "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

There is no such thing as following Christ unless you refuse to gratify inclination, and determine to obey God. It is not your feelings, your emotions, that make you a child of God, but the doing of God's will. A life of usefulness is before you, if your will becomes God's will. Then you may stand in your God-given manhood, an example of good works. You will then help to maintain rules of discipline, instead of helping to break them down. You will then help to maintain order, instead of despising it, and inciting to irregularity of life by your own course of action. I tell you in the fear of God, I know what you may be, if your will is placed on the side of God. "We are laborers together with God." You may be doing your work for time and eternity in such a manner that it will

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stand the test of the Judgment. Will you try? Will you now turn square about? You are the object of Christ's love and intercession. Will you now surrender to God, and help those who are placed as sentinels to guard the interests of his work, instead of causing them grief and discouragement?

SUITABLE READING FOR CHILDREN.

DEAR BROTHER E: I have just read the *Review and Herald*, and have seen your article giving a list of good books for our youth. I was much surprised to read your recommendation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Robinson Crusoe," and such books. You are in danger of becoming somewhat careless in your writing. It would be well to give thought and careful study to whatever is to be immortalized in print. I am really alarmed to see that your spiritual eyesight is not more clear in the matter of selecting and recommending reading for our youth. I know that the recommendation in our papers of such infatuating books as "Uncle Tom's Cabin" will in many minds justify the reading of other books which are nothing but fiction. . . . This recommendation will make taxing work for those who are laboring to persuade the youth to discard fictitious reading. I have repeatedly seen the evil of reading such books as you recommend, and have an article all prepared, cautioning our youth in this very matter.

Be sure, my brother, not to lead away from the searching of the Scriptures. It has been revealed to me that the purchase and sale by our brethren of story-books such as are commonly circulated in Sunday-schools, is a snare to our people, especially to our children. It leads them to expend money for that class of reading which fevers the imagination, and unfits them for the real duties of practical life. You may be assured that this recommendation of

yours will be acted upon. The youth need no such sanction or liberty; for their taste and inclination are all in this direction. But I hope no more such recommendations will appear. You must be getting away from Jesus and his teachings, and do not realize it.

It is Satan's work to present to our youth newspaper stories, and story-books that fascinate the senses, and thus destroy their relish for the word of God. Do not, my dear brother, throw everything that comes into your mind, into the *Review and Herald*, but write guardedly. If the Spirit of Christ moves you to write, then use your pen, feeling the burden of souls, weeping between the porch and the altar, crying, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." But if it is only your own feelings and active mind that prompt you to write, then refrain until the Lord's Spirit presses and moves you. Do not think that because you pursue a certain course, and do certain things, it is an evidence that they are right, and that you must present them to others as a rule or guide. It is not best for you to feel at liberty to speak your mind upon such matters as concern the welfare of our youth, recommending books which do not tend to spirituality or piety. If you fancy that such reading will develop firm, unspotted principle, you are mistaken. May the Lord help you to move cautiously and humbly, and not throw out misleading statements in the papers; for they will be considered as having been sanctioned by our people. You are putting a burden upon others, to counteract the influence of these sentiments.

My brother, your safety is in walking humbly with God. I tremble when I read your many articles, giving counsel and rules for other ministers. It is hardly proper for you to have so much to say in this direction. If you become self-sufficient and self-confident, the Lord will certainly leave you to make some mistake. You need carefully to guard your

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own soul, and to seek a daily, living experience in the things of God. You should keep self out of sight, and let Jesus appear. Christ is your strength, your shield; you are a weak, erring man, and need to be very cautious, lest you stumble. I entreat you to be on your guard, that you do not in word or in deed mar the sacred work of God.

I have felt so thankful for you, that you could act a part in this great work. Jesus loves you, and he will work with your efforts if you have a living connection with God. But you must live a life of watchfulness and prayer. Do not become careless. Do not separate from Jesus, but bring him into your everyday life. Do not make work for yourself and others by careless admissions and counsels; but know that unless Christ is taken into your heart, unless your eye is single to the glory of God, pride will come into your heart, self-esteem will prevail, and you will, ere you are aware, be walking carelessly. "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way."

There are many of our youth whom God has endowed with superior capabilities. He has given them the very best of talents; but their powers have been enervated, their minds confused and enfeebled, and for years they have made no growth in grace and in a knowledge of the reasons of our faith, because they have gratified a taste for story-reading. They have as much difficulty to control the appetite for such superficial reading, as the drunkard has to control his appetite for intoxicating drink. These might to-day be connected with our publishing houses, and be efficient workers, to keep books, prepare copy for the press, or to read proof; but their talents have been perverted until they are mental dyspeptics, and consequently are unfitted for a responsible position anywhere. The imagination is diseased. They live an unreal life. They are unfitted for the practical duties of life; and that which is the most sad and discouraging is, they have lost

all relish for solid reading. They have become infatuated and charmed with just such food for the mind as the intensely exciting stories contained in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." That book did good in its day to those who needed an awakening in regard to their false ideas of slavery; but we are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world, where such stories are not needed in the preparation for eternal life.

The only safety for any of us is to be thoroughly converted, and to be conversant with the truth as it is revealed in the word of God, that we may be able to give to every man that asks us, a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear.

The special effort of ministers, and of workers all through our ranks, for this time should be to turn away the attention of the youth from all exciting stories, to the sure word of prophecy. The attention of every soul striving for eternal life should center upon the Bible.

It seems wonderfully strange to me, considering all I have written in regard to the reading of exciting stories, to see a recommendation from your pen to read "Robinson Crusoe," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and "Æsop's Fables." My brother, you made a mistake in writing that article. If these books are among those which you have for sale, I beg of you never to offer them again to our youth. It is your duty to call their attention to the Bible; do not become their tempter by offering to them attractive story-books, which will divert their minds from the study of the Scriptures. We must ourselves be drinking of the water of life, else we will be constantly hewing out for ourselves broken cisterns which can hold no water.

There are a thousand ways and plans that Satan has of creeping in to unsettle the minds of youth; and unless the soul is firmly and fully stayed upon God, and conscientiously guarded upon the very point of keeping the mind employed in searching the

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Scriptures, and becoming grounded in our faith, they will surely be ensnared. We cannot be off guard for a moment. We cannot allow ourselves to move from impulse. We must set a guard about our minds and the minds of our children, that they may not be allured by Satan's temptations.

We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time in the heavenly sanctuary, should be our constant study. We should teach our children what the typical day of atonement signified, and that it was a special season of great humiliation and confession of sins before God. The antitypical day of atonement is to be of the same character. Every one who teaches the truth by precept and example, will give the trumpet a certain sound. You need ever to cultivate spirituality, because it is not natural for you to be heavenly minded. The great work is before us of leading the people away from worldly customs and practices, up higher and higher, to spirituality, piety, and earnest work for God. It is your work to proclaim the message of the third angel, to sound the last note of warning to the world. May the Lord bless you with spiritual eye-sight. I write this in love, seeing your danger. Please consider these things carefully and prayerfully.

ADVICE TO THE YOUNG.

To the students of South Lancaster Academy I would say, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Never be ashamed of your faith; never be found on the side of the enemy. "Ye are the light of the world." Your faith is to be revealed as precious truth, — truth which all should have, and all must have, if they are saved. As a people, we are in the minority. We are not popular. Our enemies

will be watching us for evil, to betray us, and to ruin our souls. They will not appreciate our motives. They will misinterpret our earnest zeal, and our intense desire to have others see and understand the truth, that they may do the will of God by obeying all his commandments. But we should fight the good fight of faith, and be found "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

It is with feelings of inexpressible sadness, and sometimes almost with despair, that I contemplate the condition of the young, and see how difficult it is to encourage those to obtain an education to whom I know God has liberally intrusted capabilities. Without education, they will be crippled and inefficient in any position. Yet in gaining this education they will be exposed to dangers and temptations. Satan will try to employ their cultivated abilities in his service.

Some employ their powers to evil purposes. The subtle poison of sensuality courses through their veins, and it finds little obstruction in its way. It is fascinating, bewitching. The mind, which, with due regard for moral integrity, is capable of the highest degree of cultivation and literary excellence, is often degraded to administer to lust. Elevated morals and practical godliness have no charms for these deluded souls; and it is almost impossible to bring to bear upon them any influence, either by precept or example, that shall counteract the efforts of Satan to corrupt and ruin their souls. Unless these young men and women are willing to learn, willing to be counseled by those of experience, they will surely be led astray by the wiles of Satan. And unless those who teach them are steadily growing in grace and in a knowledge of the truth, and in real spiritual discernment, they will be in danger, by their example and by advancing erroneous ideas, of unconsciously aiding the enemy in his work, leading souls to regard that as best for them, which will bring the least good, and be of the least benefit to their souls.

The plans devised and carried out for the education

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of our youth are none too broad. They should not have a one-sided education, but all their powers should receive equal attention. Moral philosophy, the study of the Scriptures, and physical training should be combined with the studies usually pursued in schools. Every power — physical, mental, and moral — needs to be trained, disciplined, and developed, that it may render its highest service; for unless all are equally developed, one faculty cannot do its work thoroughly, without overtaxing some part of the human machinery.

Much has been said and written in regard to the importance of training the mind for its highest service. This has sometimes led to the opinion that if the intellect is educated to put forth its highest powers, it will strengthen the physical and moral nature, for the development of the whole man. Time and experience have proved this to be an error. We have seen men and women go forth as graduates from college, who were in no way qualified to make a proper use of the wonderful physical organism with which God had provided them. The whole body is designed for action, not for inaction. If the physical powers are not taxed equally with the mental, too much strain is brought upon the latter. Unless every part of the human machinery performs its allotted tasks, the mental powers cannot be used to their highest capability for any length of time. Natural powers must be governed by natural laws, and the faculties must be educated to work harmoniously, and in accord with these laws. The teachers in our schools can disregard none of these particulars without shirking responsibility. Pride may lead them to seek for a high worldly standard of intellectual attainment, that students may make a brilliant show; but when it comes to solid acquirements — those which are essential to fit men and women for any and every emergency in practical life, — such students are only partially prepared to make life a success. Their defective education often leads to failure in whatever branch of business they undertake.

Gymnasium exercises may in some instances be an advantage. They were brought in to supply the want of useful physical training, and have become popular with educational institutions; but they are not without drawbacks. Unless carefully regulated, they are productive of more harm than good. Some have suffered life-long physical injury through these gymnasium sports. The manual training connected with our schools, if rightly conducted, will largely take the place of the gymnasium.

Teachers should give far more attention to the physical, mental, and moral influences in our schools. Although the study of the sciences may carry the students to high literary attainments, it does not give a full, perfect education. When special attention is given to the thorough development of every physical and moral power which God has given, then students will not leave our colleges calling themselves educated while they are ignorant of that knowledge which they must have for practical life, and for the fullest development of character.

My heart aches as I see these deficiencies; for the result must be loss of health, a lack of care-taking ability, and a want of adaptation to that kind of labor which is most essential to success in life. The newspapers abound in sensational records of frauds and embezzlements, of misery in families — husbands eloping with other men's wives, and wives eloping with other women's husbands, — all because these parties were not trained to habits of industry, and never learned how to economize time, or to employ their faculties in the best way to make a happy home.

Would that I could arouse every teacher in our land on this subject. There is a work for them to do, to broaden and elevate their educational work. There is a period of time just before us, when the condition of the world will become desperate; when that true religion which yields obedience to a "Thus saith the Lord," will become almost extinct. Our youth should be taught that wicked deeds are not forgotten or overlooked because God does not

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immediately punish the perpetrators with extreme indignation. God keeps a reckoning with the nations. Through every century of this world's history, evil-workers have been treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath; and when the time fully comes that iniquity shall have reached the stated boundary of God's mercy, his forbearance will cease. When the accumulated figures in heaven's record books shall mark the sum of transgression complete, wrath will come, unmixed with mercy, and then it will be seen what a tremendous thing it is to have worn out the divine patience. This crisis will be reached when the nations shall unite in making void God's law.

The days will come when the righteous will be stirred to zeal for God, because of the abounding iniquity. None but divine power can stay the arrogance of Satan, united with evil men; but in the hour of the church's greatest danger, most fervent prayer will be offered in her behalf by the faithful remnant, and God will hear and answer at the very time when the guilt of the transgressor has reached its hight. He will "avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them." They will be jealous for the honor of God. They will be zealous in prayer, and their faith will grow strong.

There is too little zeal among the students. They should make more earnest efforts. It requires much study to know how to study. Each student must cultivate the habit of industry. He should see that no second-class work comes forth from his hand. He should take to himself the words Paul addressed to Timothy: "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all. Take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

The duty of old and young must be set forth in simple, positive language, because our lot is cast in perilous times, when it seems that truth must be overborne by falsehood and Satanic delusions. In the time of testing and trial, the shield of Omnipotence will be spread over those whom God has made the depositaries of his law. When legislators shall abjure the principles of Protestantism, so as to give countenance and the right hand of fellowship to Romanism, then God will interpose in a special manner in behalf of his own honor and the salvation of his people.

The principles necessary for our youth to cultivate, must be kept before them in their daily education, that when the decree shall go forth requiring all to worship the beast and his image, they may make the right decisions, and have strength to declare, without wavering, their confidence in the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, even at the very time when the law of God is made void by the religious world. Those who waver now, and are tempted to follow in the wake of apostates who have departed from the faith, "giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," will surely be found on the side of those who make void the law of God, unless they repent, and plant their feet firmly upon the faith once delivered to the saints.

If we are living amid those fearful perils described in the word of God, should we not be awake to the realities of the situation? Why keep so silent? Why make of the least importance the things that are of the greatest interest to every one of us? The Bible should be our dearest treasure, and should be earnestly studied and zealously taught to others. How can this marvelous indifference continue upon those who have had light and knowledge?

Prophecy and history should form a part of the studies in our schools, and all who accept positions as educators, should prize more and more the revealed will of God. They should, in simplicity, instruct the students. They should unfold the Scriptures, and

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show by their own life and character the preciousness of Bible religion and the beauty of holiness; but never, for one moment, let the impression be left upon any one that it would be for his profit to hide his faith and doctrines from the unbelieving people of the world, fearing that he might not be so highly honored if his principles were known.

It is no time to be ashamed of our faith. We are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. The whole universe is looking with inexpressible interest to see the closing work of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. At such a time as this, just as the great work of judging the living is to begin, shall we allow unsanctified ambition to take possession of the heart? What can be of any worth to us now, except to be found loyal and true to the God of heaven? What is there of any real value in this world, when we are on the very borders of the eternal world? What education can we give to the students in our schools, that is so necessary as a knowledge of "what saith the Scripture"?

EXAMPLES OF HEROIC FIDELITY TO GOD.

Joseph, when honored by the Egyptians, did not conceal his loyalty to God.

Elijah, amid the general apostasy, did not seek to hide the fact that he served the God of heaven. Baal's prophets numbered four hundred and fifty, his priests, four hundred, and his worshipers were thousands; yet Elijah did not try to make it appear that he was on the popular side. He grandly stood alone. The mountain was covered with people full of eager expectation. The king came in great pomp, and the idolaters, confident of triumph, shouted his welcome. But God had been greatly dishonored. One man, and only one man, appeared to vindicate the honor of God. With clear, trumpet-like tones, Elijah addressed the vast multitude: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The result was,

that the Lord God, who ruleth in the heavens, was vindicated, and the Baal-worshipers were slain. Where are the Elijahs of to-day?

Daniel's history is a remarkable one. He carried out his faith and principles against great opposition. He was condemned to death, because he would not abate one jot of his allegiance to God, even in the face of the king's decree. It might, at this day, be called over-righteousness to go, as was his wont, three times a day, and kneel before the open window for prayer, while he knew that prying eyes were observing him, and that his enemies were ready to accuse him of disloyalty to the king; but Daniel would allow no earthly power to come in between him and his God, even with the prospect of death in the den of lions. Although God did not prevent Daniel from being cast into a den of lions, an angel went in with him and closed their mouths, so that no harm befell him; and in the morning, when the king called him, he responded, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." He was a noble, steadfast servant of God.

Nothing is gained by cowardice, or by fearing to let it be known that we are God's commandment-keeping people. Hiding our light, as if ashamed of our faith, will result only in disaster. God will leave us to our own weakness. May the Lord forbid that we should refuse to let our light shine forth in any place to which he may call us. If we venture to go forth of ourselves, following our own ideas, our own plans, and leave Jesus behind, we need not expect to gain fortitude, courage, or spiritual strength. God has had moral heroes, and he has them now, — those who are not ashamed of being his peculiar people. Their wills and plans are all subordinate to the law of God. The love of Jesus has led them not to count their lives dear unto themselves. Their work has been to catch the light from the word of God, and to

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let it shine forth in clear, steady rays to the world. Fidelity to God is their motto.

AN EDUCATED MINISTRY.

The merchant, the carpenter, the farmer, and the lawyer, all have to learn their trade or profession. At first, for want of knowledge, they do imperfect work; but as they continue patiently at their vocations, they become masters of their several callings. Without close application of mind and heart, and all the powers of the being, the minister will prove a failure. He may be a preacher, but he must also be fitted to act as a pastor. Study must never cease; it must be continued all through the period of his labor, no matter how well qualified for the labor he may think himself to be.

The times demand an intelligent, educated ministry, not novices. False doctrines are being multiplied. The world is becoming educated to a high standard of literary attainment; and sin, unbelief, and infidelity are becoming more bold and defiant, as intellectual knowledge and acuteness are acquired. This state of things calls for the use of every power of the intellect; for it is keen minds, under the control of Satan, that the minister will have to meet. He should be well-balanced by religious principles, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Too much haphazard work has been done, and minds have not been exercised to their fullest capacity. Our ministers will have to defend the truth against base apostates, as well as to measure Scripture evidence with those who advocate specious errors. Truth must be placed in contrast with bold assertions. Our ministers must be men who are wholly consecrated to God, men of no mean culture; but their minds must be all aglow with religious fervor, gathering divine rays of light from heaven, and flashing them amid the darkness that covers the earth, and the gross darkness that surrounds the people.

Vice and crime, and iniquity of all kinds, are steadily on the increase. The penetrating power of Bible truth must show the contrast between truth and error. A higher grade of preparation is required in order to do good service for the Master. But if the minister leans upon the knowledge he acquires, and does not feel the great necessity of divine enlightenment daily, the education gained is only a stumbling-block to sinners. We want the God of all wisdom to be brought into all our labor, into all our experiences; then every iota of knowledge obtained is a power for good, and will aid in developing capacity and Christ-like earnestness. This is religion.

WORLDLY MINDEDNESS.

DEAR BROTHER F: It is time that we were closely examining our hearts, to see whether or not we are in the faith and in the love of God. If there is not an awakening among us who have had so great light and so many privileges, we shall sink to ruin, and our fate will be worse than that of Chorazin and Bethsaida; "for," as Christ said of those cities, "if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

It is high time that you were deeply in earnest for your own soul and for the souls of your children. Your calling in Christ requires this. My soul is weighed down with grief, my heart is sick and sad, as I contemplate your condition; for I know that unless you are a transformed man, your anchorage will be continually shifting. O, "seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." I entreat of you to humble your heart before God, and never, never give over the effort till you are a different man. I feel a deep interest in your spiritual condition, and want to see you striving earnestly for

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your own salvation and for that of your dear children, who I know are managed very much as Eli managed his children. Let all your influence be on the Lord's side. Let your children see that you are not a creature of impulse, but a man of unwavering principle. They will copy the pattern you give them. Until I see a change in you for the better, I shall continue to plead with you and exhort you.

We are nearing the close of time. We want not only to teach present truth in the pulpit, but to live it out of the pulpit. Examine closely the foundation of your hope of salvation. While you stand in the position of a herald of truth, a watchman upon the walls of Zion, you cannot have your interest interwoven with mining or real-estate business, and at the same time do effectually the sacred work committed to your hands. Where the souls of men are at stake, where eternal things are involved, the interest cannot safely be divided. This is especially so in your case. While engaged in this business, you have not been cultivating heart-felt piety. You have had a feverish desire to obtain means. You have talked to many about the financial advantages to be gained by investing in lands in ——. Again and again you have been engaged in picturing the advantages of these enterprises; and this while you were an ordained minister of Christ, pledged to give your soul, body, and spirit to the work of the salvation of souls. At the same time you were receiving money from the treasury to support yourself and your family. Your talk was calculated to draw the attention and money of our people away from our institutions and from the business of promoting the Redeemer's kingdom on the earth. Its tendency was to beget in them a desire to invest their means where you assured them that it would be doubled in a short time, and to flatter them with the prospect that they could help the cause a great deal more by so doing. You may not knowingly have advised them to withdraw their means from the cause of God; but some had no money to handle except that invested in our institutions, and it has been withdrawn from them to invest according to your suggestions.

We are in a certain sense our brother's keeper. We are individually related to souls who may, through the merits of Jesus Christ, seek for glory, honor, and immortality. Their purity, sincerity, zeal, consistency, and piety are affected by our words, our works, our deportment, our prayers, and our faithful discharge of duty. Christ said to his disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." The ministers of Jesus Christ must teach, both in the church and to individuals, the fact that a profession of faith, even by Seventh-day Adventists, unless it proceeds from heart-felt piety, is powerless for good. Religious light is to shine forth from the church, and especially from the ministers, in clear, steady rays. It is not to flame up on special occasions, and then grow dim, and flicker, as if about to go out. The excellence of Jesus Christ will ever shine in the character of true believers; and they will adorn the doctrine of our Saviour. Thus the excellency and the power of the gospel are revealed. Each member of the church is required to be in living connection with the Source of all light, and to be a spiritual worker, doing his part by good works to reflect light to the world.

Especially should the minister keep himself from every worldly entanglement, and bind himself to the Source of all power, that he may represent correctly what it means to be a Christian. He should cut loose from everything that would in any way divert his mind from God and the great work for this time. Christ expects him, as his employed servant, to be like himself in mind, in thought, in word, in action. He expects every man who opens the Scriptures to others, to work carefully and intelligently, not exercising his powers unwisely, in a way to injure or overtask them, but so that he may be fitted to do good work for the Lord. Every soul is called into active labor in some one of the various depart-

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ments of the work, and the Shepherd will lead and guide his flock.

The tongue of the minister is not to be employed in telling men the best way to bury their means in the earth; he should tell them how to invest safely in the bank of heaven. May the Lord impart to you spiritual discernment, is my prayer; for you will surely make shipwreck of faith unless you get into a different condition spiritually. You need the converting power of God; and unless you are changed, you will surely let go your hold of the truth. But although you should gain the whole world, it would be a poor return for the loss of your soul. May the Lord help you, my brother, to come speedily to your senses, and move like a man who has a well-balanced mind. May you take up your work with heart and lips sanctified, and walk humbly with your God.

PRACTICAL GODLINESS.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS AT OAKLAND: My mind is drawn out to write to you. Again and again I find myself talking to you in my dreams, and in every case you are in trouble. But whatever comes, let it not enfeeble your moral courage, and cause your religion to degenerate into a heartless form. The loving Jesus is ready to bless abundantly; but we need to obtain an experience in faith, in earnest prayer, and in rejoicing in the love of God. Shall any of us be weighed in the balances, and be found wanting? We must watch ourselves, watch the least unholy promptings of our nature, lest we become traitors to the high responsibilities God has bestowed upon us as his human agencies.

We must study the warnings and corrections he has given his people in past ages. We do not lack light. We know what works we should avoid, and what requirements he has given us to observe; so if

we do not seek to know and do that which is right, it is because wrong-doing suits the carnal heart better than right-doing.

There will always be faithless ones, who wait to be carried forward by the faith of others. They have not an experimental knowledge of the truth, and consequently have not felt its sanctifying power on their own souls. It should be the work of every member of the church, quietly and diligently to search his own heart, and see if his life and character are in harmony with God's great standard of righteousness.

The Lord has done great things for you in California, particularly in Oakland; but there is much more that he would be well pleased to do if you would make your works correspond with your faith. God never honors unbelief with rich blessings. Review what God has done, and then know that it is only the beginning of what he is willing to do.

We must place a higher value than we have upon the Scriptures, for therein is the revealed will of God to men. It is not enough merely to assent to the truthfulness of God's word, but we must search the Scriptures, to learn what they contain. Do we receive the Bible as the "oracle of God"? It is as really a divine communication as though its words came to us in an audible voice. We do not know its preciousness, because we do not obey its instructions.

There are evil angels at work all around us, but because we do not discern their presence with our natural vision, we do not consider as we should the reality of their existence as set forth in the word of God. If there was nothing in the Scriptures hard to be understood, man, in searching its pages, would become lifted up in pride and self-sufficiency. It is never best for one to think that he understands every phase of truth; for he does not. Then let no man flatter himself that he has a correct understanding of all portions of Scripture, and feel it his duty to make everybody else understand them just as he does. Let intellectual pride be banished. I lift my voice in warn-

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ing against every species of spiritual pride. There is an abundance of it in the church to-day.

When the truth we now cherish was first seen to be Bible truth, how very strange it appeared, and how strong was the opposition we had to meet in presenting it to the people for the first time; but how earnest and sincere were the obedient, truth-loving laborers! We were indeed a peculiar people. We were few in numbers, without wealth, without worldly wisdom or worldly honors; and yet we believed God, and were strong and successful, a terror to evil-doers. Our love for one another was steadfast; it was not easily shaken. Then the power of God was manifested among us, the sick were healed, and there was much calm, sweet, holy joy. But while the light has continued to increase, the church has not advanced proportionately. The fine gold has gradually become dim, and deadness and formality have come in to cripple the energies of the church. Their abundant privileges and opportunities have not led God's people onward and upward to purity and holiness. A faithful improvement of the talents God has intrusted to them would greatly increase those talents. Where much is given, much will be required. Those only who faithfully accept and appreciate the light God has given us, and who take a high, noble stand in self-denial and self-sacrifice, will be channels of light to the world. Those who do not advance will retrograde, even on the very borders of the heavenly Canaan. It has been revealed to me that our faith and our works in no way correspond to the light of truth bestowed. We must not have a half-hearted faith, but that perfect faith which works by love and purifies the soul. God calls upon you in California to come into close relationship with him.

One point will have to be guarded, and that is individual independence. As soldiers in Christ's army, there should be concert of action in the various departments of the work. No one has the right to start out on his own responsibility, and advance ideas in

our papers on Bible doctrines, when it is known that others among us hold different opinions on the subject, and that it will create controversy. The First-day Adventists have done this. Each has followed his own independent judgment, and sought to present original ideas, until there is no concerted action among them, except, perhaps, in opposing Seventh-day Adventists. We should not follow their example. Each laborer should act with reference to the others. Followers of Jesus Christ will not act independently one of another. Our strength must be in God, and it must be husbanded, to be put forth in noble, concentrated action. It must not be wasted in meaningless movements.

In union there is strength. There should be union between our publishing houses and our other institutions. If this unity existed, they would be a power. No strife or variance should exist among the workers. The work is one, superintended by one Leader. Occasional and spasmodic efforts have done harm. However energetic they may be, they are of little value; for the reaction will surely come. We must cultivate a steady perseverance, continually searching to know and do God's will.

We should know what we must do to be saved. We should not, my brethren and sisters, float along with the popular current. Our present work is to come out from the world and be separate. This is the only way we can walk with God, as did Enoch. Divine influences were constantly working with his human efforts. Like him, we are called upon to have a strong, living, working faith, and this is the only way we can be laborers together with God. We must meet the conditions laid down in the word of God, or die in our sins. We must know what moral changes are essential to be made in our characters, through the grace of Christ, in order to be fitted for the mansions above. I tell you in the fear of God, we are in danger of living like the Jews,—destitute of the love of God, and ignorant of his

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power, while the blazing light of truth is shining all around us.

Ten thousand times ten thousand may profess to obey the law and the gospel, and yet be living in transgression. Men may present in a clear manner the claims of truth upon others, and yet their own hearts be carnal. Sin may be loved and practiced in secret. The truth of God may be no truth to them, because their hearts have not been sanctified by it. The love of the Saviour may exercise no constraining power over their base passions. We know by the history of the past that men may stand in sacred positions, and yet handle the truth of God deceitfully. They cannot lift up holy hands to God, "without wrath and doubting." This is because God has no control over their minds. The truth was never stamped upon their hearts. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." Are you doing this? Many are not, and never have done it. Their conversion has been only superficial.

"If ye then," says the apostle, "be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." The heart is the citadel of the man. From it are the issues of life or death. Until the heart is purified, a person is unfit to have any part in the fellowship of the saints. Does not the Heart-searcher know who are lingering in sin, regardless of their souls? Has there not been a witness to the most secret things in the life of every one? I was compelled to hear the words spoken by some men to women and girls, — words of flattery, words that would deceive and infatuate. Satan uses all these means to destroy souls. Some of you may thus have been his agents; and if so, you will have to meet these things in the Judgment. The angel said of this class, "Their hearts have never been given to God. Christ is not in them. Truth is not there.

Its place is occupied by sin, deception, and falsehood. The word of God is not believed and acted upon."

The present activity of Satan in working upon hearts, and upon churches and nations, should startle every student of prophecy. The end is near. Let our churches arise. Let the converting power of God be experienced in the hearts of the individual members, and then we shall see the deep movings of the Spirit of God. The forgiveness of sins is not the sole result of the death of Jesus. He made the infinite sacrifice, not only that sin might be removed, but that human nature might be restored, rebeautified, reconstructed from its ruins, and made fit for the presence of God.

We should show our faith by our works. A greater anxiety should be manifested to have a large measure of the spirit of Christ; for in this will be the strength of the church. It is Satan who is striving to have God's children draw apart. Love, O, how little love we have — love for God and for one another! The word and spirit of truth, dwelling in our hearts, will separate us from the world. The immutable principles of truth and love will bind heart to heart, and the strength of the union will be according to the measure of grace and truth enjoyed. Well would it be for us each to hold up the mirror, God's royal law, and see in it the reflection of his own character. Let us be careful not to neglect the danger signals, and the warnings given in his word. Unless heed is given to these warnings, and defects of character are overcome, these defects will overcome those who possess them, and they will fall into error, apostasy, and open sin. The mind that is not elevated to the highest standard, will in time lose its power to retain that which it had once gained. "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow

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in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

God has selected a people in these last days, whom he has made the depositaries of his law; and this people will ever have disagreeable tasks to perform. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted." It will require much diligence and a continual struggle to keep evil out of our churches. There must be rigid, impartial discipline exercised; for some who have a semblance of religion, will seek to undermine the faith of others, and will privily work to exalt themselves.

The Lord Jesus, on the Mount of Olives, plainly stated that "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." He speaks of a class who have fallen from a high state of spirituality. Let such utterances as these come home with solemn, searching power to our hearts. Where is the fervor, the devotion to God, that corresponds to the greatness of the truth which we claim to believe? The love of the world, the love of some darling sin, has weaned the heart from the love of prayer, and of meditation on sacred things. A formal round of religious services is kept up; but where is the love of Jesus? Spirituality is dying. Is this torpor, this mournful deterioration, to be perpetuated? Is the lamp of truth to flicker and go out in darkness, because it is not replenished by the oil of grace?

I wish that every minister and every one of our workers, could see this matter as it has been presented to me. Self-esteem and self-sufficiency are killing spiritual life. Self is lifted up; self is talked about. O that self might die! "I die daily," said the apostle Paul. When this proud, boasting self-sufficiency and this complacent self-righteousness permeate the soul, there is no room for Jesus. He is

given an inferior place, while self swells into importance, and fills the whole temple of the soul. This is the reason why the Lord can do so little for us. Should he work with our efforts, the instrument would appropriate all the glory to his own smartness, his wisdom, his ability, and he would congratulate himself, as did the Pharisee, "I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I possess." When self shall be hidden in Christ, it will not be brought to the surface so frequently. Shall we meet the mind of the Spirit of God? Shall we dwell more upon practical godliness, and far less upon mechanical arrangements?

The servants of Christ should live as in his sight, and as in the sight of angels. They should seek to understand the requirements of our time, and prepare to meet them. Satan is constantly attacking us in new and untried ways, and why should the officers in God's army be inefficient? Why should they leave any faculty of their nature uncultivated? There is a great work to be done, and if there is any want of harmonious action in doing it, it is because of self-love and self-esteem. It is only when we are careful to carry out the Master's orders without leaving our stamp and identity upon the work, that we work efficiently and harmoniously. "Press together," said the angel, "press together."

I urge upon you who minister in sacred things, to dwell more upon practical religion. How rarely are seen the tender conscience, and true, heartfelt sorrow of soul and conviction of sin! It is because there are no deep movings of the Spirit of God among us. Our Saviour is the ladder which Jacob saw, whose base rested on the earth, and whose topmost rounds reached the highest heavens. This shows the appointed method of salvation. If any of us are finally saved, it will be by clinging to Jesus as to the rounds of a ladder. To the believer, Christ is made wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Let no one imagine that it is an easy thing to overcome the enemy, and that he can be borne aloft to

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an incorruptible inheritance without effort on his part. To look back, is to grow dizzy; to let go the hold, is to perish. Few appreciate the importance of striving constantly to overcome. They relax their diligence, and as a result, become selfish and self-indulgent. Spiritual vigilance is not thought to be essential. Earnestness in human effort is not brought into the Christian life.

There will be some terrible falls by those who think they stand firm, because they have the truth; but they have it not as it is in Jesus. A moment's carelessness may plunge a soul into irretrievable ruin. One sin leads to the second, and the second prepares the way for the third, and so on. We must, as faithful messengers of God, plead with him constantly to be kept by his power. If we swerve a single inch from duty, we are in danger of following on in a course of sin that will end in perdition. There is hope for every one of us, but only in one way, and that is by binding ourselves to Christ, and exerting every energy to attain to the perfection of his character.

That religion which makes of sin a light matter, dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner regardless of his actions, only encourages the sinner to believe that God will receive him while he continues in that which he knows to be sin. This is what some are doing who profess to believe present truth. The truth is kept apart from the life, and that is the reason it has no power to convict and convert the soul.

God has shown me that the truth as it is in Jesus has never been brought into the lives of some in California. They do not have the religion of the Bible. They have never been converted; and unless their hearts are sanctified through the truth which they have accepted, they will be bound up with the tares; for they bear no clusters of precious fruit to show that they are branches of the Living Vine.

"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The lives of many show that they have no living connection with God. They are drifting into the channel of the world. They have, in reality, no part or lot with Christ. They love amusement, and are filled with selfish ideas, plans, hopes, and ambitions. They serve the enemy under the pretense of serving God. They are in bondage to a task-master, and this bondage they choose, making themselves willing slaves of Satan.

The false idea entertained by many, that the restraining of children is an injury, is ruining thousands upon thousands. Satan will surely take possession of the children if you are not on your guard. Do not encourage their association with the ungodly. Draw them away. Come out from among such yourselves, and show them that you are on the Lord's side.

Will those who claim to be the children of the Most High, elevate the standard,—not simply while assembled in your meeting, but as long as time shall last? Will you not be on the Lord's side, and serve him with full purpose of heart? If you do as did the children of Israel in forsaking God's express requirements, you will surely receive of his judgments; but if you put away sin, and exercise living faith, the richest of Heaven's blessings will be yours.

Basel, Switzerland, March 1, 1887.

"YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE."

"PRESENT your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

In the time of ancient Israel, the priests critically examined every offering that was brought as a sacrifice. If any defect was discovered, the animal was refused; for the Lord had commanded that the offering should

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be "without blemish." We are to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God; and should we not seek to make the offering as perfect as possible? God has given us every instruction necessary for our physical, mental, and moral well-being; and it is the duty of every one of us to bring our habits of life into conformity with the divine standard in every particular. Will the Lord be pleased with anything less than the best we can offer? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart." If you do love him with all your heart, you will desire to give him the best service of your life, and you will seek to bring every power of your being into harmony with the laws that will promote your ability to do his will.

Every faculty of our being was given us that we might render acceptable service to our Maker. When, through sin, we perverted the gifts of God, and sold our powers to the prince of darkness, Christ paid a ransom for us, even his own precious blood. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them." You are not to follow the customs of the world. "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

WORLDLY INFLUENCES.

DEAR SISTER G: My heart is drawn out in love and sympathy for you. The present state of things in your family is the sure result of following out your mistaken ideas; and the end is not yet. You have not seen the danger of associating so freely with your relatives. They have had a far greater influence over you and yours, than you have had over them. Their being your relatives makes them no less a hinderance to your spiritual welfare, and no less transgressors of God's holy law. Their course is fully as offensive to God as that of any others who refuse light and truth,

and will not listen to any evidence in its favor. Injurious impressions have been made upon your mind, and have influenced your course of action. God has made every provision to bring salvation within our reach; but he will not thrust it upon us against our will. He has laid down conditions in his word, and we should diligently, interestedly, with heart and mind, set about the task of learning these conditions, lest we make some mistake, and fail to secure our title to the mansions above.

We cannot serve God and the world at the same time. We must not center our affections on worldly relatives, who have no desire to learn the truth. We may seek in every way, while associated with them, to let our light shine; but our words, our deportment, our customs and practices, should not in any sense be molded by their ideas and customs. We are to show forth the truth in all our intercourse with them. If we cannot do this, the less association we have with them, the better it will be for our spirituality. If we place ourselves among associates whose influence has a tendency to make us forgetful of the high claims the Lord has upon us, we invite temptation, and become too weak in moral power to resist it. We come to partake of the spirit and cherish the ideas of our associates, and to place sacred and eternal things lower than the ideas of our friends. We are, in short, leavened just as the enemy of all righteousness designed we should be.

The young, if brought under this influence, are more easily affected by it than those who are older. Everything leaves its impress upon their minds, — the countenances they look upon, the voices they hear, the places they visit, the company they keep, and the books they read. It is impossible to overestimate the importance, for this world and the next, of the associations we choose for ourselves, and more especially for our children.

The first years of life are more important than any other period. Decided progress will be made, either

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in a right direction or a wrong one. On one hand, any amount of frivolous attainment may be gained; and on the other, any amount of solid, valuable knowledge for practical life, in becoming acquainted with God, and in learning how to strengthen every faculty that God has intrusted to us. Most important and essential for our present and eternal good, is the knowledge of divine truth as revealed in the word of God.

We are living in a time when everything that is false and superficial is exalted above the real, the natural, and the enduring. The mind must be kept free from everything that would lead it in a wrong direction. It should not be encumbered with trashy stories, which do not add strength to the mental powers. The thoughts will be of the same character as the food we provide for the mind. The time devoted to needless, unimportant things, would better be spent in contemplating the wonderful mysteries of the plan of salvation, and in using every God-given power to learn the ways of the Lord, that our feet may not stumble upon the dark mountain of unbelief, or stray from the path of holiness which was cast up by infinite sacrifice for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. The strength of intellect, the substantial knowledge gained, are acquisitions which the gold of Ophir could not buy. Their price is above gold and silver. This kind of education the young do not usually choose. They urge their desires, their likes and dislikes, their preferences and inclinations; but if the parents have correct views of God, of the truth, and of the influences and associations which should surround their children, they will feel their God-given responsibility to firmly guide the inexperienced youth in the right way, knowing that what they sow they will also reap.

Could my voice reach the parents all through the land, I would warn them not to yield to the desires of their children in choosing their companions or associates. Little do parents consider that injurious impressions are far more readily received by the young than are divine impressions; therefore their associations should be the most favorable for the growth of grace, and for the truth revealed in the word of God to be established in the heart. If children are with those whose conversation is upon unimportant, earthly things, their minds will come to the same level. If they hear the principles of religion slurred, and our faith belittled; if sly objections to the truth are dropped in their hearing, these things will fasten in their minds, and mold their characters. If their minds are filled with stories, be they true or fictitious, there is no room for the useful information and scientific knowledge which should occupy them. What havoc has this love for light reading wrought with the mind! How it has destroyed the principles of sincerity and true godliness, which lie at the foundation of a symmetrical character! It is like a slow poison taken into the system, which will sooner or later reveal its bitter effects. When a wrong impression is left upon the mind in youth, a mark is made, not on sand, but on enduring rock.

The associations of your children are of a character to draw them away from every influence that would interfere with, or break up, their health-destroying habits. They are impatient if they cannot have their own way. The advice of Christians is distasteful to them. They are traveling the road to ruin, and any influence which seeks to lead them in an opposite direction, stirs the worst impulses of their hearts. They are creatures of circumstance. The formation of these early ties which are unfavorable to religious impressions, has had a powerful, controlling influence over them at every subsequent step. Let the youth be placed in the most favorable circumstances possible; for the company they keep, the principles they adopt, the habits they form, will settle the question of their usefulness here, and of their future, eternal interests, with a certainty that is infallible. The parents should not concede to the inclinations of their children, but should follow the plain path of

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duty which God has marked out, restraining them in kindness, denying with firmness and determination, yet with love, their wrong desires, and with earnest, prayerful, persevering effort, leading their steps away from the world, upward to heaven. Children should not be left to drift into whatever way they are inclined, and to go into avenues which are open on every side, leading away from the right path. None are in so great danger as those who apprehend no danger, and are impatient of caution and counsel.

It is because I see your danger, my sister, that I write you now as I do. While there may be many to flatter you, and enjoy your hospitality without seeking to impart a blessing by right counsel, I must warn you of unseen danger, which will imperil your present and eternal happiness. We are approaching stormy times, and we want to study the true foundation of our faith. We need to search the law book, to see if our title to the immortal inheritance is without a flaw.

Our people have been regarded as too insignificant to be worthy of notice; but a change will come. The Christian world is now making movements which will necessarily bring commandment-keeping people into prominence. There is a constant supplanting of God's truth by the theories and false doctrines of human origin. Movements are being set on foot to enslave the consciences of those who would be loyal to God. The law-making powers will be against God's people. Every soul will be tested. O that we would, as a people, be wise for ourselves, and by precept and example impart that wisdom to our children! Every position of our faith will be searched into; and if we are not thorough Bible students, established, strengthened, and settled, the wisdom of the world's great men will lead us astray.

The world is busy, anxious, and devoted. Evil is eagerly followed as though it were righteousness, error as though it were truth, and sin as though it were holiness. Darkness is covering the earth, and

gross darkness the people. And shall God's people be asleep at such a time as this? Shall those who hold the truth be silent, as if paralyzed? Infidels declare that if they believed what Christians profess to believe, they would be far more in earnest than they. If we believe that the end of all things is at hand, "what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

Every soul who truly believes the truth will have corresponding works. All will be earnest and solemn, and unwearied in their efforts to win souls to Christ. If the truth is first planted deep in their own souls, then they will seek to plant it in the hearts of others. The truth is kept altogether too much in the outer court. Bring it into the inner temple of the soul, enthrone it in the heart, and let it control the life. The word of God should be studied and obeyed, then the heart will find rest and peace and joy, and the aspirations will tend heavenward; but when truth is kept apart from the life, in the outer court, the heart is not warmed with the glowing fire of God's goodness.

The religion of Jesus is, by many, reserved for certain days, or certain occasions, and at other times is laid aside and neglected. The abiding principle of truth is not merely for a few hours on the Sabbath, or for a few acts of charity, but it is to be brought into the heart, refining and sanctifying the character. If there is a moment when man is safe without this special light and strength from Heaven, then he may dispense with the truth of God. The Bible, God's pure, holy word, must be his counselor and guide, the controlling power of his life. It gives forth its lessons to us, if we will take them to heart.

Abraham was a man favored of God. The Lord said, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Abraham was honored of God because he cultivated home religion, and caused the fear of the Lord to pervade his whole household. It is God who says, "I know

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him, that he will *command*," — there will be no betraying of sacred trust on his part, no yielding to any one but God; there is a law, and Abraham will keep it; no blind affection will cloud his sense of right, and interfere between God and the souls of his children; that kind of indulgence which is the veriest cruelty, will not lead Abraham astray.

Parents and children alike belong to God, to be ruled by him. By affection and authority combined, Abraham ruled his house. God's word has given us rules for our guidance. These rules form the standard from which we cannot swerve, if we would keep the way of the Lord. God's will must be paramount. The question for us to ask is not, What have others done? What will my relatives think? or, What will they say of me if I pursue this course? but, What has God said? Neither parent nor child can truly prosper in any course excepting in the way of the Lord.

I am thankful that you have noble sons who are seeking to walk in the ways of the Lord; but I hope you will discern more clearly the path of duty in respect to their associations. This will determine whether you are growing in spirituality, or whether you are dwarfed in your religious life. The stern dictates of conscience must be obeyed, even though it be difficult; and it will help you to gain in moral power. Duties are often crosses which we must lift. Prayer and praise to God are not always offered without a struggle. Self-denial and cross-bearing lie directly in the path we must travel if we reach the gates of the city of God. Jesus has led the way; will we follow?

We must be workers together with God, not alone for our own salvation, but in doing all we can for the salvation of others. Thus we become partners in the great plan of redemption, and will be sharers in the eternal weight of glory by and by. God calls upon you to *press* your way "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." May the Lord bless you, is my prayer. But remember, if you

are united with Christ, you must be a co-worker with him. Our piety and religious duties will become narrowed down to our own interests, unless we are daily partakers of the spirit of Christ. Interest for the souls of others is calculated to give breadth and depth and stability to Christian character.

The Lord is coming. We are nearing home, and we want to take large inspirations of the heavenly atmosphere; then we shall become identified with the Saviour in all his plans. We shall be elevated, and able to elevate others, and shall be efficient in good works.

NEEDS OF OUR INSTITUTIONS.

FROM time to time I have felt urged by the Spirit of the Lord to bear testimony in regard to the necessity of procuring the very best talent to work in the various institutions and other departments of the cause. Heretofore there has not been sufficient care to secure the best ability for all parts of our work. Those who bear responsibilities must be men trained for the work, — men whom God can teach, and whom he can honor with wisdom and understanding, as he did Daniel. They must be thinking men, — men who bear God's impress, and who are steadily progressing in holiness, in moral dignity, and in an understanding of their work. They must be praying men, — men who will come up into the mount, and view the glory of God, and the dignity of the heavenly beings whom he has ordained to have charge of his work. Then, like Moses, they will follow the pattern given them in the mount; and they will be on the alert to secure and bring into connection with the work the very best talent that can be obtained. If they are growing men, possessing sanctified intelligence; if they listen to the voice of God, and seek to catch every ray of light from heaven, they will, like the sun, pursue an undeviating course, and they will grow in wisdom and in favor with God.

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The publishing department is an important branch of God's work, and all connected with it should feel that it is ordained of God, and that all Heaven is interested in it. Especially should those who have a voice in the management of the work, have breadth of mind and sanctified judgment. They should not waste their Lord's money by thoughtlessness, or lack of business tact; neither should they make the mistake of limiting the work by the adoption of narrow plans, and trusting the work to men of small ability.

It has been repeatedly represented to me that all our institutions should be managed by men who are spiritually minded, and who will not weave their own defective ideas and plans into their management. This work should not be left to men who will mingle the sacred with the common, and who will regard the work of God as being upon about the same level as earthly things, to be managed in about the same common way in which they have been in the habit of managing their own temporal affairs. Until those can be connected with our institutions who have breadth of mind, and who can lay plans in harmony with the growth of the work and its exalted character, the tendency will be to narrow down everything that is undertaken, and God will be dishonored. O that all who have responsibilities to bear in connection with the cause of God, would come up into a higher, holier atmosphere, where every true Christian should be! If they would, then both they and the work which they represent would be elevated, and clothed with sacred dignity, and they would command the respect of all connected with the work.

Among those employed in our institutions, have been men who have not sought counsel of God, who have not conformed to the great principles of truth which God has laid down in his word, and who have consequently manifested marked defects of character. As the result, the greatest work ever committed to mortals has been marred by man's defective management; whereas, if Heaven's rules had been made

the governing principle, there would have been a much nearer approach to perfection in all departments of the work.

Those placed in leading positions, should be men who have sufficient breadth of mind to appreciate persons of cultivated intellect, and to recompense them proportionately to the responsibilities they bear. True, those who engage in the work of God, should not do so merely for the wages they receive, but rather for the honor of God, for the advancement of his cause, and to obtain imperishable riches. At the same time, we should not expect that those who are capable of doing, with exactness and thoroughness, work that requires thought and painstaking effort, should receive no greater compensation than the less skillful workman. A true estimate must be placed upon talent. Those who cannot appreciate good work and true ability, should not be managers in our institutions; for their influence would tend to circumscribe the work, and to bring it down to a low level.

If our institutions would be as prosperous as God designs they shall be, there must be more thoughtfulness and earnest prayer, mingled with unabating zeal and spiritual ardor. To connect the right class of laborers with the work, may require a greater outlay of means, but it will be economy in the end; for while it is essential that economy be exercised in everything possible, it will be found that the efforts to save means by employing those who will work for low wages, and whose labor corresponds in character with their wages, will result in loss. The work will be retarded, and the cause belittled. Brethren, you may economize as much as you please in your personal affairs,—in building your houses, in arranging your clothing, in providing your food, and in your general expenses; but do not bring this economy to bear upon the work of God in such a way as to hinder men of ability and true moral worth from engaging in it.

In the Olympic games to which the apostle Paul

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calls our attention, those engaged in the races were required to make most thorough preparations. For months they were trained by different masters in the physical exercises calculated to give strength and vigor to the body. They were restricted to such food as would keep the body in the most healthy condition, and their clothing was such as would leave every organ and muscle untrammeled. Now if those who were to engage in running a race for earthly honor, were obliged to submit to such severe discipline in order to succeed, how much more necessary it is for those who are to engage in the work of the Lord, to be thoroughly disciplined and prepared, if they would be successful! Their preparation should be as much more thorough, their earnestness and self-denying efforts as much greater, than were those of the aspirants for worldly honors, as heavenly things are of more value than earthly. The mind, as well as the muscles, should be trained to the most diligent and persevering efforts. The road to success is not a smooth way, over which we are borne in palace cars; but it is a rugged path, filled with obstacles which can be surmounted only by patient toil.

My brethren, not one-half the care has been taken that there should have been, to impress upon those who could labor in the cause, the importance of qualifying themselves for the work. With their powers all undisciplined, they can do but imperfect work; but if they shall be trained by wise and consecrated teachers, and are led by the Spirit of God, they will not only be able to do good work themselves, but will give the right mold to others who may work with them. It should, then, be their constant study to learn how they can become more intelligent in the work in which they are engaged. None should rest in ease and inaction; but all should seek to elevate and ennoble themselves, lest by their deficient understanding they fail to realize the exalted character of the work, and lower it to meet their own finite standard.

I saw that there was great inefficiency in the bookkeeping in many departments of the cause. Bookkeeping is, and ever will be, an important part of the work; and those who have become expert in it are greatly needed in our institutions, and in all branches of the missionary work. It is a work that requires study that it may be done with correctness and dispatch, and without worry or overtaxation; but the training of competent persons for this work has been shamefully neglected. It is a disgrace to allow a work of such magnitude as ours, to be done in a defective, inaccurate way. God wants as perfect work as it is possible for human beings to do. It is a dishonor to sacred truth and its Author to do his work in any other way. I saw that unless the workers in our institutions were subject to the authority of God, there would be a lack of harmony and unity of action among them. If all will obey his directions, the Lord will stand as the invisible commander; but there must also be a visible head who fears God. The Lord will never accept a careless, disorderly company of workers; neither will he undertake to lead forward and upward to noble hights and certain victory, those who are self-willed and disobedient. The upward progress of the soul indicates that Jesus bears rule in the heart. That heart through which he diffuses his peace and joy, and the blessed fruits of his love, becomes his temple and his throne. "Ye are my friends," says Christ, "if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Our institutions are far beneath what God would have them be, because many of those connected with them are not in fellowship with him. They are not growing men. They are not constantly learning of Jesus; therefore they are not becoming more and more efficient. If they would come close to him, and seek his help, he would walk with them and talk with them; he would be their counselor in all things, and would grant to them, as he did to Daniel, heavenly wisdom and understanding.

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Years ago I saw that our people were far behind in obtaining that knowledge which would qualify them for positions of trust in the cause. Every member of the church should put forth efforts to qualify himself to do work for the Master. To each has been appointed a work, according to his ability. Even now, at the eleventh hour, we should arouse to educate men of ability for the work, that they may, while occupying positions of trust themselves, be educating by precept and example all who are associated with them.

Through a selfish ambition, some have kept from others the knowledge they could have imparted. Others have not cared to tax themselves by educating any one else. Yet this would have been the very best kind of work they could have done for Jesus. Says Christ, "Ye are the light of the world;" and for this reason we are to let our light shine before men.

If all that the Lord has spoken in reference to these things had been heeded, our institutions would to-day occupy a higher and holier position than they do. But men have been satisfied with small attainments. They have not sought with all their might to rise in mental, moral, and physical capabilities. They have not felt that God required this of them; they have not realized that Christ died that they might do this very work. As the result, they are far behind what they might be in intelligence, and in the ability to think and plan. They could have added virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge, and thus have become strong in the Lord. But this they have failed to do. Let each go to work now with a firm determination to rise. The present need of the cause is not so much for more men, as for greater skill and consecration in the laborers.

OUR INSTITUTIONS AT BATTLE CREEK.

THE evils arising from centering so many responsibilities in Battle Creek, have not been few. The dangers are many, because of the unconsecrated elements that wait only until a change of circumstances shall encourage them to put all their influence on the side of wrong. If all those connected with our institutions were only devoted and spiritually minded, relying upon God more than upon themselves, there would be far greater prosperity than we have hitherto seen. But while there is such decided lack of humble trust and entire dependence upon God, we cannot be sure of anything. Our great need to-day is of men who are baptized with the Holy Spirit of God,—men who walk with God as did Enoch. We do not want men who are so narrow in their outlook that they will circumscribe the work instead of enlarging it, or who follow the motto, "Religion is religion; business is business." We need men who are far-seeing, who can take in the situation, and reason from cause to effect.

THE COLLEGE.

The teachers in our College should be men and women of well-balanced minds, and who have a strong moral influence; who know how to deal wisely with minds, and who possess the true missionary spirit. If all were of this character, the burdens that now rest on the President would be lightened, and the danger of his becoming prematurely worn would be obviated. But it is this wisdom that is lacking.

It is not desirable to place the tuition too low. It should be sufficient to meet the expenses, even if the College is not so largely patronized. Those who really prize the advantages to be obtained there, will make extra exertions to secure them. The larger part of those who would be induced to come because of the low tuition, would be of no benefit to other

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students or to the church. The larger the number, the more tact, skill, and vigilance is required in their management.

When the College was first started, there was a fund placed in the *Review and Herald* Office for the benefit of those who wished to obtain an education, but had not the means. This was used by several students, who thus had a good start, and could earn enough to replace the amount they had drawn, that others might be benefited by it.

Some provision should now be made for the maintenance of such a fund to loan to poor but worthy students who desire to prepare themselves for missionary work. There are among us persons of ability who might be of good service in the cause were they but looked after and encouraged. When any of these are too poor to obtain the advantages of the College, the churches should feel it a privilege to defray their expenses. The youth should have it plainly set before them that so far as possible they must work to meet their own expenses. That which costs little, will be lightly appreciated; that which costs something near its true value, will be estimated accordingly. But the churches in different fields should feel that a solemn responsibility rests upon them in regard to training youth and educating older persons to engage in missionary effort. When they see among them any who give promise of making useful workers, but who are not able to educate themselves, they should take the responsibility of sending them to the College to be instructed and developed.

QUALIFICATIONS OF MANAGERS.

There should be a thorough reformation on the part of the men who are now connected with our important institutions. They possess some valuable traits of character, while they are sadly lacking in others. Their character needs to have a different mold, — one after the likeness of Christ. They must all remember that they have not yet

attained unto perfection, that the work of character-building is not yet finished. If they will walk in every ray of light that God has given; if they will compare themselves with Christ's life and character, they will discern where they have failed to meet the requirements of God's holy law, and will seek to make themselves perfect in their sphere, even as God in heaven is perfect in his sphere. If these men had realized the importance of these things, they would to-day be far in advance of their present condition, far better qualified to fill places of trust. During these hours of probation they are to seek for perfection of character. They must learn daily of Christ. They are connected with the work of God, not because they are perfect, unerring men, without defects of character, but notwithstanding these defects. God expects them, while connected with his work, to be constantly studying and learning how to copy the Pattern.

Jesus connected John, Peter, and Judas with him in his work, making them co-laborers with him; but at the same time they were to be constantly learning lessons of Christ. They were to gather from his divine teachings, instructions which were to correct their wrong ideas, and their erroneous views of what constitutes a Christian character. John and Peter were not perfect men, but they improved every opportunity to learn. Peter did not learn to distrust himself, to be jealous of himself, until he was overcome by the temptations of the devil, and denied his Lord. Judas had the same opportunity that these disciples had to learn the lessons taught by Christ, but he did not appreciate their value. He was a hearer only, and not a doer. The result was seen in his betrayal of his Lord.

The men whom God has connected with his institutions are not to feel that there is no improvement for them to make, because they stand in responsible positions. If they are to be representative men, guardians of the most sacred work ever committed to

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mortals, they must take the position of learners. They must not feel self-sufficient or self-important. They should ever realize that they are treading on holy ground. Angels of God are ready to minister to them, and they must be continually in reception of light and heavenly influences, or they are no more fitted for the work than unbelievers.

If the character of the men connected with the Office at Battle Creek were so transformed that they could have a helpful influence over those under their control, then the outlook would be more encouraging. Whatever the men employed there may think of their ability, I have reason to say that many will need to improve greatly before they are qualified to fill their positions acceptably. They may feel competent to give counsel, but they are themselves in need of counsel from Him who is unerring in wisdom. Great and important interests are in danger of being misshaped, and of coming forth defective from their hands. If all felt their ignorance more, and would depend less on self, they might learn of the great Teacher, meekness and lowliness of heart.

God is observing everything that transpires in the Office. "Thou God seest me," should be always in mind. Every one who bears responsibilities in the Office should be courteous and kind to all. An ever-abiding sense of the presence of Christ would prevent the encroachment upon others' rights which is so common in the world's practice, but which is an offense to God. The love of Jesus must be incorporated into the lives of the workers in the several departments of the Office, in order that justice may be done, not only to the work, but to one another.

The very first work, my brethren, is to secure the blessing of God in your own hearts. Then bring this blessing into your homes, put away your criticisms, overcome your exacting ways, and let the spirit of cheerfulness and kindness prevail. The atmosphere of your homes will be carried with you to the Office, and heavenly peace will surround your souls. Wherever the love of Jesus reigns, there is pitying tenderness and thoughtfulness of others. The most precious work that my brethren can engage in, is that of cultivating a Christ-like character.

It was shown me that those who preside over our institutions should ever bear in mind that there is a chief director, who is the God of heaven. There should be strict honesty in all business transactions in every department of the work. There must be firmness in preserving order, but compassion, mercy, and forbearance should be mingled with the firmness. Justice has a twin sister, — Love. These should stand side by side. The Bible should be our guide. There can be no greater deception than for a man to think that he can find a better guide, when in difficulty, than the word of God. The blessed word must be a lamp to our feet. Bible precepts must be carried into the every-day life.

BOARD MEETINGS.

Those who compose our councils need to sit daily at the feet of Christ, and learn in his school to be meek and lowly of heart. As they are only weak and erring men themselves, they should cherish feelings of kindness and pity for others who may have erred. They are not prepared to deal justly, to love mercy, and to exercise the true courtesy which characterized the life of Christ, unless they see the necessity of being in union with him. The Trustees should ever realize that they are under the divine eye, and act with a continual sense that, as finite men, they are liable to make mistakes in laying plans, unless they are closely connected with God, and are seeking to have every deficiency removed from their characters. The divine standard must be met.

Every one who serves in Board meetings needs to seek most earnestly the wisdom from above. The transforming grace of Christ should be felt in every meeting. Then the influence of the Spirit of Christ upon the hearts of those present, will place a right

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mold upon their work. It will quell tumultuous actions and charm away the unhallowed effects of that worldliness which makes men sharp, critical, overbearing, and ready to accuse.

When these councils meet, a few words of formal prayer are offered, but the hearts of those present are not brought into harmony with God by earnest, importunate prayer, offered in living faith, in a humble and contrite spirit. If the Trustees divorce themselves from the God of wisdom and power, they cannot preserve that high-souled integrity in dealing with their fellow-men, which God requires. Without divine wisdom, their own spirit will be woven into the decisions they make. If these men are not in communication with God, Satan will surely be one in their councils, and will take advantage of their unconsecrated state. Acts of injustice will be done, because God is not presiding. The Spirit of Christ must be an abiding, controlling power over the heart and mind.

You should take the Lord with you into every one of your councils. If you realize his presence in your assemblies, every transaction will be conscientiously and prayerfully considered. Every unprincipled motive will be repressed, and uprightness will characterize all your transactions, in small as well as in great matters. Seek counsel of God first; for this is necessary in order that you may counsel together properly.

You need to watch, lest the busy activities of life lead you to neglect prayer when you most need the strength prayer would give. Godliness is in danger of being crowded out of the soul, through overdevotion to business. It is a great evil to defraud the soul of the strength and heavenly wisdom which are waiting your demand. You need that illumination which God alone can give. No one is fitted to transact his business unless he has this wisdom.

Ever since the Publishing Association was formed, light has been given from time to time, when perplexities have arisen, and the Lord has ofttimes laid down

principles which should be carried out by all the workers. In the early experience of the work, the grave responsibilities resting upon those in positions of trust were kept continually before us, and we sought the Lord from three to five times a day to give us heavenly wisdom, that we might sacredly guard the interests of the cause of God and of his chosen people.

It is the worst kind of folly to leave the Lord out of your councils, and to put confidence in the wisdom of men. In your positions of trust you are, in a special sense, to be the light of the world. You should feel an intense desire to place yourselves in connection with the God of wisdom, light, and knowledge, that you may be channels of light. Important interests are to be considered, which relate to the advancement and prosperity of the cause of present truth. How, then, can you be competent to come to right decisions, to make wise plans, and to give wise counsel, unless you are thus connected with the Source of all wisdom and righteousness? The business to be transacted in your councils has been considered altogether too lightly. Common talk, common remarks, comments made on the doings of others, have had a place in these important meetings. You should remember that the eternal God is a witness in all these gatherings. The all-seeing eye of Jehovah measures every one of your decisions, and they are compared with his holy law, his great standard of righteousness. Those in the position of counselors should be men of prayer, men of faith, men free from selfishness, men who will not dare to rely on their own human wisdom, but who will pray earnestly for light as to the best manner of conducting the business intrusted to them.

WORLDLY POLICY.

The policy which worldly business men adopt is not the policy to be chosen and carried out by the men who are connected with our institutions. Selfish policy is not heaven-born, it is earthly. In this

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world, the leading maxim is, "The end justifies the means;" and this may be traced in every department of business. It has a controlling influence in every class of society, in the grand councils of nations, and wherever the Spirit of Christ is not the ruling principle. Prudence and caution, tact and skill, should be cultivated by every one who is connected with the Office of Publication, and by those who serve in our College and Sanitarium. But the laws of justice and righteousness must not be set aside, and the principle must not prevail that each one is to make his particular branch of the work a success, regardless of other branches. The interests of all should be closely guarded, to see that no one's rights are invaded. In the world, the god of traffic is too often the god of fraud; but it must not be thus with those who are dealing with the Lord's work. The worldly standard is not to be the standard of those who are connected with sacred things.

When the scenes of the Judgment were brought before me, the books in which are registered the deeds of men, revealed the fact that the dealings of some of those professing godliness in our institutions were after the worldling's standard, not in strict accordance with God's great standard of righteousness. The relation of men in their deal with one another, especially those connected with the work of God, was opened to me quite fully. I saw that there should be no close, sharp deal between brethren who represent important institutions, different, perhaps, in character, but branches of the same work. A noble, generous, Christ-like spirit should ever be maintained by them. The spirit of avarice should have no place in their transactions. God's cause could not be advanced by any action on their part contrary to the spirit and character of Christ. A selfish manner of dealing in one will provoke the same disposition in others; but the manifestation of liberality and true courtesy will awaken the same spirit in return, and would please our heavenly Father.

Worldly policy is not to be classed with sound discretion, although it is too often mistaken for it. It is a species of selfishness, in whatever cause it is exercised. Discretion and sound judgment are never narrow in their workings. The mind that is guided by them has comprehensive ideas, and does not become narrowed down to one object. It looks at things from every point of view. But worldly policy has a short range of vision. It can see the object nearest at hand, but fails to discover those at a distance. It is ever watching for opportunities to gain advantage. Those who follow a course of worldly policy, are building themselves up by pulling out the foundation from another man's building. Every structure must be built upon a right foundation, in order to stand.

ROYALTIES ON BOOKS.

Brain-workers have a God-given capital. The result of their study belongs to God, not to man. If the worker faithfully gives to his employer the time for which he receives his pay, then his employer has no further claim upon him. And if by diligent and close economy of moments, he prepares other matter valuable for publication, it is his to use as he thinks will best serve the cause of God. If he gives up all but a small royalty, he has done a good work for those who handle the book, and he should not be asked to do more. God has not placed upon the publishing Board the responsibility of being conscience for others. They should not persistently seek to force men to their terms.

The authors are responsible to God for the use which they make of their means. There will be many calls for money. Mission fields will have to be entered, and this requires much outlay. Those to whom God has intrusted talents, are to trade upon these talents according to their ability; for they are to act their part in carrying forward these interests. When the members of the Board take it upon themselves to urge that all the profits from our denomina-

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tional books shall go to the Publishing Association and the agents, and that the authors, after being paid for the time and expense of writing a book, should relinquish their claim to a share in the profits, they are undertaking a work which they cannot carry out. These book-writers have as much interest in the cause of God as do those who compose the Board of Trustees. Some of them have had a connection with the work almost from its infancy.

It was presented before me that there were poor men whose only means of obtaining a livelihood was their brain-work; also that there are business men connected with our institutions, who have not grown up with them, and have not had the benefit of all the instruction that God has given from time to time, relative to their management. They have not incorporated true religion, the spirit of Christ, into their business. The Publishing Association should not, therefore, be made an all-controlling power. Individual talent and individual rights must be respected. Should arrangements be made to invest all the results of personal talent in the Publishing Association, other important interests would be crippled.

To every man God has given his work. To some he has given talents of means and influence; and those who have the interests of God's cause at heart will understand his voice telling them what to do. They will have a burden to push the work where it needs pushing.

Several times it has been pointed out to me that there has been a close, ungenerous spirit exercised toward Bro. H from the very first of his labors in Battle Creek. It makes me sad to state the reason. It was because he went there a stranger and in poverty. Because he was a poor man, he has been placed in unpleasant positions, and made to feel his poverty. Men connected with our institutions have thought that they could bring him to their terms, and he has had a very unpleasant time. There are sad chapters in his experience, which would not have

passed into history if his brethren had been kind, and had dealt with him in a Christ-like manner. The Lord's cause should always be free from the slightest injustice; and no act connected with it should savor in the smallest degree of penuriousness or oppression.

The Lord guards every man's interest. He was always the poor man's friend. There is a most wonderful dearth of Christ-like love in the hearts of nearly all who are handling sacred things. I would say to my brethren everywhere, Cultivate the love of Christ! It should well up from the soul of the Christian like streams in the desert, refreshing and beautifying, bringing gladness, peace, and joy into his own life, and into the lives of others. "None of us liveth to himself." If there is shown the least oppression of the poor, or unjust dealing with them in either small or great things, God will hold the oppressor accountable.

Do not seek to make terms which are not just and fair with either Eld. J or Prof. H, or with any other brain-worker. Do not urge or force them to accept the terms of those who do not know what it is to make books. These men have a conscience, and are accountable to God for their intrusted capital and the use they make of it; you are not to be conscience for them. They want the privilege of investing the means which they may acquire by hard labor, when and where the Spirit of God shall indicate.

My brethren must remember that the cause of God covers more than the publishing house at Battle Creek and the other institutions there established. No one knows better than Bro. J how that Office came into existence. He has been connected with the publishing work from its very commencement,—when it was oppressed by poverty; when the food upon our tables was hardly sufficient to meet the wants of nature, because self-denial had to be practiced in eating and in dressing and in our wages, in order that the paper might live. This was positively necessary then, and those who passed through that

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experience would be ready, under similar circumstances, to do the same again.

It is not becoming for those who have had no experience in these trials, but have become connected with the work in its present prosperity, to urge the early workers to submit to terms in which they can see no justice. Bro. J loves the cause of God, and will invest his means to advance it wherever he sees it is necessary. Then leave this burden of receiving and dispensing this means where it belongs, — on the men to whom God has intrusted talents of influence and of ability. They are responsible to God for these. Neither the Publishing Association nor its chief workers should assume the stewardship of these authors.

If the Board should be able to bring Brn. H and J to their terms, would not these writers feel that they had been dealt with unjustly? Would not a door of temptation be opened before them, which would interfere with sympathy and harmony of action? Should the managers grasp all the profits, it would not be well for the cause, but would produce a train of evils, disastrous to the Publishing Association. It would encourage the spirit of intolerance which is already manifest to some degree in their councils. Satan longs to have a narrow, conceited spirit, which God cannot approve, take possession of the men who are connected with the sacred message of truth.

The same principles which apply to the work in our institutions at Battle Creek, apply as well to that in the field at large. The following extracts are from a letter written to Bro. K, Nov. 8, 1880: —

"There is a broad field for the laborers; but many are getting above the simplicity of the work. Now is the time to labor, and to do it in the wise counsel of God. If you connect unconsecrated persons with the missions and Sabbath-schools, the work will become a mere form. The workers in every part of the field must study how to work economically, and in the simplicity of Christ, and how to plan most successfully to reach hearts."

"We are in danger of spreading over more territory and starting more enterprises than we can attend to properly. There is danger of neglecting some important parts of the work, through over-attention to others. To undertake so large an amount of work that nothing can be done perfectly, is a bad plan. We are to move forward, but not to get so far above the simplicity of the work that it will be impossible to look after all the enterprises without sacrificing our best helpers to keep things in running order. Life and health must be regarded.

"While we should be ever ready to follow the opening providence of God, we should lay no larger plans than we have help and means to carry out successfully. We must keep up and increase the interest in the enterprises already started."

"While larger plans and broader fields are constantly opening, there must be broader views in regard to the selection and training of workers who are to labor to bring souls into the truth. Our young ministers must be encouraged to take hold of the work with energy, and be educated to carry it forward with simplicity and thoroughness. I am astonished to see how little some of our young ministers are appreciated, and how little encouragement they receive. Yet some of them cling to the work, and do anything and everything with unselfish interest."

"Narrowness and dishonest dealing must not come into the settlement with the workers, high or low. . . . There must be more of Christ's way, and less of self. Sharp criticisms should be repressed. Sympathy, compassion, and love should be cultivated by every worker. Unless Jesus comes in and takes possession of the heart, unless self is subdued and Christ is exalted, we shall not prosper as a people. I beseech of you, my brother, to labor wholly in God, not laying too many plans, but striving to have the work carried on circumspectly, and with such thoroughness that it will endure."

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CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE IN THE HOME AND THE CHURCH.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER L: My heart is burdened on your account. What you need is the converting grace of God in your hearts. You need the spirit of Jesus. You should learn meekness and lowliness of heart in the school of Christ. You do not feel your need of deep, inward piety, and on this account you are being self-deceived. You are delaying the decisions which you ought to make at once, for your own good and for the good of others. God requires every man to do his duty. He demands the whole heart, the entire affection. He would not have us profess a knowledge of Jesus Christ and the truth, and yet bear no fruit. For small or great, learned or unlearned, rich or poor, the requirement is just the same.

Every one is called upon to act according to the ability God has given him. He must render his service faithfully, or he will sully his conscience, and imperil his soul. No one can afford to lose heaven. Remember the words of Christ to all his followers, "Ye are the light of the world." God depends on those who know the way, to show it to others. He has intrusted to men the treasure of his truth. It is faith and trust and confidence in God that we need. Inward grace will be revealed in the outward actions. We need that spirit which will show to others that we have been learning in the school of Christ, and that we copy the pattern given us. We want a heart that is not lifted up unto vanity; a mind not settled on self. Each should have a constant desire to bless others. God notices our humble efforts, and they are precious in his sight. You both need home piety, sweet, satisfied contentment, without fault-finding, pettishness, scolding, or severity. Let kindness and love be the rule of your household. Whoever does not let the light of truth shine in his home, dishonors the Saviour.

The truth as it is in Jesus does much for the receiver; and not only for him, but for all who are brought within the sphere of his influence. The truly converted soul is illuminated from on high, and Christ is in that soul "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." His words, his motives, his actions, may be misinterpreted and falsified, but he does not mind it, because he has greater interests at stake. He does not consider present convenience; he is not ambitious for display; he does not crave the praise of men. His hope is in heaven, and he keeps straight on, with his eye fixed on Jesus. He does right because it is right, and because only those who do right will have an entrance into the kingdom of God. He is kind and humble, and thoughtful of others' happiness. He never says, "Am I my brother's keeper?" but he loves his neighbor as himself. His manner is not harsh and dictatorial, like that of the godless; but he reflects light from heaven upon men. He is a true, bold soldier of the cross of Christ, holding forth the word of life. As he gains in influence, prejudice against him dies away, his piety is acknowledged, and his Bible principles are respected.

Thus it is with every one who is truly converted. He bears precious fruit, and in so doing walks as Christ walked, talks as he talked, works as he worked, and the truth as it is in Jesus, through him, makes an impression in his home, in his neighborhood, and in the church. He is building a character for eternity, while working out his own salvation with fear and trembling. He is exemplifying before the world the valuable principles of truth, showing what the truth will do for the life and character of the genuine believer. He is unconsciously acting his part in the sublime work of Christ in the redemption of the world, — a work which, in its character and influence, is far-reaching, undermining the foundation of false religion and false science.

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I feel obliged to write thus, because I know your brethren will never say these things to you. I do not want you or your wife to lose the heavenly mansions; for they are worth everything to us, and we should put forth energy and zeal proportionate to the value of the object of which we are in pursuit. Eternal life is worth persevering, untiring effort.

The Lord wants you and your family to be Christians in every sense of the word, and to show in your characters the sanctifying power of the truth. If you had formed such characters, your works would stand the test of the Judgment; should the fires of the last day kindle upon your works as they now are, they would prove to be only hay, wood, and stubble. Do not think this severe; it is true. Self has been mingled with all your labors. Will you come up to the high standard? It will be like learning the first principles of what constitutes a Christian character. Christ said to the apostle Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." You, likewise, must be converted before you can do acceptable work for the Master.

My brother, if you will, you can be a strong man in God. You have talents of ability that God has intrusted to your keeping, to be sanctified to his service. But if you do not yield up all to Christ, your ability will prove dangerous both to yourself and to others, leading them to walk apart from the truth and away from Christ.

The members of the church in —— need very much done for them. They must have fervent zeal for Christ, must be more humble, more patient, more kind, more teachable, more Christ-like in every respect. In their character they should manifest to the world the sanctifying power of grace. God forbid that you should, by precept or example, bar the way to this essential work. Will you work with Jesus? Will you be true to the Lord who has bought you? Will you put into the background all matters of minor importance? You must be baptized into a larger faith,

a larger charity. You need greater reverence for things of eternal importance. It is impossible for me to impress upon your mind too strongly the extent and power of the influence which flows from the example of individual piety, and from the exhibition, by the church, of the sanctifying influence of the truth upon the character.

A much greater ingathering could be realized in ——, if the church would come into a right position before God, each seeking to set his own heart and his own house in order. Talk less, and let true inward piety shine forth in good works. Be kind; cultivate love and gentleness. Pray more; read your Bibles more. Be diligent students in the school of Christ. Then the members of the church will not be finding fault with their brethren and sisters; this is Satan's work.

I hope you will be strengthened and established in the faith. The work will surely go forward, whether we advance with it or not. It will be victorious, but the question is, Shall we be victorious with it? May God help you both to feel the need of a deep work of grace in your hearts. Remember that Jesus has bought you with the sacrifice of his own life. "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

AN IMPRESSIVE DREAM.

DEAR BROTHER M: I had an impressive dream last night. I thought that you were on a strong vessel, sailing on very rough waters. Sometimes the waves beat over the top, and you were drenched with water. You said, "I shall get off; this vessel is going down." "No," said one who appeared to be the captain, "this vessel sails into the harbor. She will never go down." But you answered: "I shall be washed overboard. As I am neither captain nor mate, who

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cares? I shall take my chances on that vessel you see yonder." Said the captain, "I shall not let you go there; for I know that vessel will strike the rocks before she reaches the harbor." You straightened yourself up, and said with great positiveness, "This vessel will become a wreck; I can see it just as plain as can be." The captain looked upon you with piercing eye, and said firmly: "I shall not permit you to lose your life by taking that boat. The timbers of her frame-work are worm-eaten, and she is a deceptive craft. If you had more knowledge, you could discern between the spurious and the genuine, the holy and that appointed to utter ruin."

I awoke; but it is this dream that leads me to write to you. I was feeling deeply over some of these things, when a letter came, saying that you were "under great temptation and trial." What is it, Bro. M? Is Satan tempting you again? Is God permitting you to be brought to the same place where you have failed before? Will you now let unbelief take possession of your soul? Will you fail every time, as did the children of Israel? God help you to resist the devil, and to come forth stronger from every trial of your faith!

Be careful how you move. Make straight paths for your feet. Close the door to unbelief, and make God your strength. If perplexed, hold still; make no move in the dark. I am deeply concerned for your soul. This may be the last trial that God will grant you. Advance not one step in the downward road to perdition. Wait, and God will help you. Be patient, and the clear light will appear. If you yield to impressions, you will lose your soul, and the soul is of great value with God.

I have been writing upon the first volume of "Great Controversy;" and it makes me feel very solemn as I review these important subjects, — creation, and the events from the fall of Satan to the fall of Adam. The Lord seems very near me as I write, and I am deeply moved as I contemplate this controversy,

from the beginning to the present time. The workings of the powers of darkness are laid clearly before my mind. Most trying times are before us; and Satan, clad in angel robes, will come to souls with his temptations as he came to Christ in the wilderness. He will quote Scripture; and unless our life is hid with Christ in God, he will surely bind our souls in unbelief.

Time is very short, and all that is to be done must be done quickly. The angels are holding the four winds, and Satan is taking advantage of every one who is not fully established in the truth. Every soul is to be tested. Every defect in the character, unless it is overcome by the help of God's Spirit, will become a sure means of destruction. I feel as never before the necessity for our people to be energized by the spirit of the truth; for Satan's devices will ensnare every soul who has not made God his strength. The Lord has much work to be done; and if we do what he has appointed for us to do, he will work with our efforts.

DAILY STUDY OF THE BIBLE NECESSARY.

THOSE who are called of God to labor in word and doctrine, should ever be learners. They should constantly seek to improve, that they may be ensamples to the flock of God, and do good to all with whom they are brought in contact. Those who do not feel the importance of advancement and self-improvement, will not grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ.

All Heaven is interested in the work going on in this world, which is to prepare men and women for the future, immortal life. It is God's plan that human agencies shall have the high honor of acting as co-workers with Jesus Christ in the salvation of souls. The word of God plainly reveals that it is

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the privilege of the instrument in this great work to realize that there is One at his right hand ready to aid him in every sincere endeavor to reach the highest moral and spiritual excellence in the Master's work. This will be the case with all who feel their need of help. They should look upon the work of God as sacred and holy, and should bring to him, every day, offerings of joy and gratitude, in return for the power of his grace, by which they are enabled to make advancement in the divine life. The worker should ever take humble views of himself, considering his many lost opportunities, for want of diligence and appreciation of the work. He should not become discouraged, but should continually renew his efforts to redeem the time.

Men whom God has chosen to be his ministers, should prepare themselves for the work by thorough heart-searching and by close connection with the world's Redeemer. If they are not successful in winning souls to Christ, it is because their own souls are not right with God. There is altogether too much willing ignorance with a large number who are preaching the word. They are not qualified for this work by a thorough understanding of the Scriptures. They do not feel the importance of the truth for this time, and therefore the truth is not to them a living reality. If they would humble their souls before God; if they would walk according to the Scriptures, in all humility of mind, then they would have more distinct views of the Pattern which they should copy; but they fail to keep their eyes fixed upon the Author and Finisher of their faith.

It is not necessary that any one should yield to the temptations of Satan, and thus violate his conscience and grieve the Holy Spirit. Every provision has been made in the word of God whereby all may have divine help in their endeavors to overcome. If they keep Jesus before them, they will become changed into his image. All who by faith have

Christ abiding in them, carry a power into their labor which makes them successful. They will be constantly growing more and more efficient in their work, and the blessing of God, shown in the prosperity of the work, will testify that they are indeed laborers together with Christ. But however much one may advance in spiritual life, he will never come to a point where he will not need diligently to search the Scriptures; for therein are found the evidences of our faith. All points of doctrine, even though they have been accepted as truth, should be brought to the law and to the testimony; if they cannot stand this test, "there is no light in them."

The great plan of redemption, as revealed in the closing work for these last days, should receive close examination. The scenes connected with the sanctuary above should make such an impression upon the minds and hearts of all that they may be able to impress others. All need to become more intelligent in regard to the work of the atonement, which is going on in the sanctuary above. When this grand truth is seen and understood, those who hold it will work in harmony with Christ to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God, and their efforts will be successful. By study, contemplation, and prayer, God's people will be elevated above common, earthly thoughts and feelings, and will be brought into harmony with Christ and his great work of cleansing the sanctuary above from the sins of the people. Their faith will go with him into the sanctuary, and the worshipers on earth will be carefully reviewing their lives, and comparing their characters with the great standard of righteousness. They will see their own defects; they will also see that they must have the aid of the Spirit of God if they would become qualified for the great and solemn work for this time which is laid upon God's ambassadors.

Christ said: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath

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eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." How many of those who are laboring in word and doctrine are eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood? How many can comprehend this mystery? The Saviour himself explains this matter: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The *words* I speak unto you, they are *Spirit*, and they are *life*." The word of God must be interwoven with the living character of those who believe it. The only vital faith is that faith which receives and assimilates the truth till it is a part of the being, and the motive power of the life and action. Jesus is called the Word of God. He accepted his Father's law, wrought out its principles in his life, manifested its spirit, and showed its beneficent power in the heart. Says John, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." The followers of Christ must be partakers of his experience. They must assimilate the word of God. They must be changed into its likeness by the power of Christ, and reflect the divine attributes. They must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or there is no life in them. The spirit and work of Christ must become the spirit and work of his disciples.

It is not enough to *preach* the truth; it must be carried out in the life. Christ must be abiding in us, and we in him, in order to do the work of God. Each must have an individual experience, and put forth personal efforts to reach souls. God requires each to put all his powers into the work, and through continual effort, educate himself to do that work acceptably. He expects every one to bring the grace of Christ into his heart, that he may be a bright and shining light to the world. If God's workers train all

their powers thoroughly, then they may work understandingly, in all wisdom, and God will surely respond to their efforts to uplift, refine, and save their fellowmen. All the workers must use tact, and bring their faculties under the controlling influence of the Spirit of God. They must make it a business to study his word, and hear God's voice addressing them from his living oracles in reproof, in instruction, or in encouragement, and his Spirit will strengthen them, that they may, as God's workers, advance in religious experience. Thus they will be led on step by step to greater hights, and their joy will be full.

While engaged in the work that God has given them to do, they will find no time and have no disposition to glorify themselves; neither will they find time to murmur or complain, for their affections are centered on things above, not on earthly things. Heart, soul, and body will then be enlisted in the work of the Master. They will not labor selfishly, but will deny themselves for Christ's sake. They will lift his cross; for they are his true disciples. They will feed day by day upon the precious truths of God's word, and will thus be strengthened for duty and braced for trial. In this way they will become strong, well-developed men and women in Christ. They will then be true sons and daughters of the heavenly King. The greatness of the truth which they love and contemplate, will expand the mind, strengthen the judgment, and elevate the character. They will not be novices in the great work of saving souls; for they are working with the wisdom given them of God. Neither will they be dwarfs in religious life, but will grow up in Christ, their living head, to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. The conflicts with the enemies of truth will then only strengthen their hopes, and they will have precious victories, because they call to their aid the mighty Helper, who never disappoints the humble seeker. If their efforts are successful, all the glory will be given to God. Heaven will come very near

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to them in sympathy and co-operation. They are made indeed a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. They are marked characters because of their purity of heart and life, their strength of purpose, their firmness and usefulness in the cause of God. They are God's noblemen.

In the religious life of every soul who is finally victorious, there will be scenes of terrible perplexity and trial; but his knowledge of the Scriptures will enable him to bring to mind the encouraging promises of God, which will comfort his heart, and strengthen his faith in the power of the Mighty One. He reads, "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward;" "that the trial of your faith, being more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The trial of faith is more precious than gold. All should learn that this is a part of the discipline in the school of Christ, which is essential to purify and refine them from the dross of earthliness. They must endure with fortitude the taunts and attacks of enemies, and overcome all obstacles that Satan may place in their path to hedge up the way. He will try to lead them to neglect prayer, and to discourage them in the study of the Scriptures; and he will throw his hateful shadow athwart their path, to hide Christ and the heavenly attractions from their view.

None should go along shrinking and trembling, under continual doubt, sowing their path with complainings; but all should look up to God, and see his goodness, and rejoice in his love. Summon all your powers to look up, not down at your difficulties; then you will never faint by the way. You will soon see Jesus behind the cloud, reaching out his hand to help you; and all you have to do, is to give him your hand in simple faith, and let him lead you. As you

become trustful, you will, through faith in Jesus, become hopeful. The light shining from the cross of Calvary will reveal to you God's estimate of the soul, and appreciating that estimate, you will seek to reflect the light to the world. A great name among men is as letters traced in sand; but a spotless character will endure to all eternity. God gives you intelligence and a reasoning mind, whereby you may grasp his promises; and Jesus is ready to help you in forming a strong, symmetrical character. Those who possess such a character, need never become discouraged because they have not success in worldly affairs. They "are the light of the world." Satan cannot destroy or make of none effect the light that shines forth from them.

God has a work for each to do. It is no part of his plan that souls shall be sustained in the battle of life by human sympathy and praise; but he means that they shall go without the camp, bearing the reproach, fighting the good fight of faith, and standing in his strength under every difficulty. God has opened to us all the treasures of heaven through the precious gift of his Son, who is fully able to uplift, ennoble, and fit us, through his perfection of character, for usefulness in this life and for a holy heaven. He came to our world, and lived as he requires his followers to live. His was a life of self-denial and constant self-sacrifice. If we encourage selfishness and ease and the gratification of inclination, and do not put forth our best efforts to co-operate with God in the wonderful work of elevating, ennobling, and purifying us, that we may become sons and daughters of God, then we do not meet his requirements; we sustain a continual loss in this life, and we shall eventually lose the future, immortal life. God wants you to work, not with self-disparagement nor in discouragement, but with the strongest faith and hope, with cheerfulness and joy, representing Christ to the world. The religion of Jesus is joy, peace, and happiness. As we search the Scriptures,

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and see the infinite condescension of the Father in giving Jesus to the world that all who believe in him may have everlasting life, every power of our being should be called into activity, to give praise and honor and glory to him for his unspeakable love to the children of men.

EDUCATION OF WORKERS.

We have a work to do which but few realize. It is to carry the truth to all nations. There is a broad field for laborers in foreign lands, as well as in America. God calls for men who are devoted, pure, large-hearted, broad-minded, and humble, to enter these fields. How few have any sense of this great work! We must arouse, and work from a higher standpoint than we have hitherto done.

Those who now embrace the truth, have every advantage, especially in the accumulation of light and knowledge brought out in our publications. Past experiences, rich and varied, should now be appreciated in their true light. We know how hard the work moved at first; how many obstacles were arrayed against it; how few facilities were at the command of the pioneers in this cause to use in its advancement: but now all is changed, and the clear light is shining. If primitive Christianity could enter the hearts of all who claim to believe the truth, it would bring to them new life and power. The people who are in darkness would then see the contrast between truth and error, between the teachings of God's word and the fables of superstition.

Mistakes have been made in not seeking to reach ministers and the higher classes with the truth. People not of our faith have been shunned altogether too much. While we should not associate with them to receive their mold, there are honest ones everywhere for whom we should labor cautiously, wisely, and intelligently, full of love for their souls. A fund should be raised to educate men and women to labor for these higher classes, both here and in other countries. We have had altogether too much talk about coming down to the common mind. God wants men of talent and good minds, who can weigh arguments,—men who will dig for the truth as for hid treasures. These men will be able to reach, not only the common, but the better classes. Such men will ever be students of the Bible, fully alive to the sacredness of the responsibilities resting upon them. They will give full proof of their ministry.

We have too little working talent in the different branches of the cause. New enterprises must be set on foot. We need ability to devise plans whereby souls who are in the darkness of error can be reached. We need the intelligence of varied minds; but we should not find fault with them because their ideas do not just fit our own. We should have broader plans for the education of workers to give the message. Those who believe and love the truth, have done nobly in giving of their means to sustain its various enterprises, but there is great lack of capable workers. It is not wise to be constantly expending means to open untried fields, while so little is done to prepare workers to occupy them. God's work must not be hindered for want of agents to execute it. He calls for cultivated men, who are Bible students, who love the truth that they open to others, and who bring it into their own lives and characters. We want men who love Jesus and cling to him, and who appreciate the infinite sacrifice made in behalf of fallen humanity. We want lips touched with holy fire, hearts pure from the defilement of sin. Those whose piety is shallow, and who have great ambition to be considered first and best, are not the men for this time. Those who think more of their own way than of the work, are not wanted.

Our churches are not receiving the kind of training that will lead them to walk in all humility of mind, to

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put away all pride of external display, and to labor for the inward adorning. The efficiency of the church is precisely what the zeal, purity, self-denial, and intelligent labor of the ministers make it. An active missionary spirit should characterize its individual members. They must have deeper piety, stronger faith, and broader views. They must make more thorough work in personal effort. What we need is a living religion. A single individual of enlarged conceptions of duty, whose soul is in communion with God, and who is full of zeal for Christ, will exert a powerful influence for good. He drinks at no low, turbid, polluted stream, but from the pure, high waters at the fountain head; and he can communicate a new spirit and power to the church. As the pressure from without increases, God would have his church vitalized by the sacred, solemn truths they believe. The Holy Spirit from heaven, working with the sons and daughters of God, will surmount obstacles, and hold the vantage-ground against the enemy. God has great victories in reserve for his truth-loving, commandment-keeping people. The fields are already whitening for the harvest. We have light, and rich, glorious endowments from heaven in the truth made ready to our hands; but men and women have not been educated and disciplined to work in the fast-ripening harvest fields.

God knows with what fidelity and spirit of consecration every one fulfills his mission. There is no place for the slothful in this great work, — no place for the self-indulgent, or those who are incapable of making life a success in any calling, — no place for half-hearted men, who are not fervent in spirit, willing to endure hardness, opposition, reproach, or death for Christ's sake. The Christian ministry is no place for drones. There is a class of men attempting to preach who are slipshod, careless, and irreverent. They would better be tilling the soil than teaching the sacred truth of God.

Young men must soon bear the burdens older ones

have borne. We have lost time in neglecting to bring young men to the front, and give them a higher, more solid education. The work is constantly advancing, and we must obey the command, "Go forward!" Much good could be done by youth who are established in the truth, and are not easily influenced or swayed from the right by their surroundings, but who walk with God, who pray much, and who put forth most earnest endeavors to gather all the light they can. The worker should be prepared to put forth the highest mental and moral energies with which nature, cultivation, and the grace of God have endowed him; but his success will be proportionate to the degree of consecration and self-sacrifice in which the work is done, rather than to either natural or acquired endowments. The most earnest and continued efforts to acquire qualifications for usefulness are necessary; but unless God works with the human efforts, nothing can be accomplished. Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Divine grace is the great element of saving power; without it all human efforts are unavailing; its co-operation is needed even with the strongest and most earnest human efforts for the inculcation of truth.

The cause of God needs teachers who have high moral qualities, and can be trusted with the education of others, — men who are sound in the faith, and have tact and patience; who walk with God, and abstain from the very appearance of evil; who stand so closely connected with God that they can be channels of light, — in short, Christian gentlemen. The good impressions made by such will never be effaced; and the training thus given will endure throughout eternity. What is neglected in this training process is likely to remain undone. Who will undertake this work? We would that there were strong young men, rooted and grounded in the faith, who had such a living connection with God that they could, if so counseled by our leading brethren, enter the higher colleges in our land, where they would

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have a wider field for study and observation. Association with different classes of minds, an acquaintance with the workings and results of popular methods of education, and a knowledge of theology as taught in the leading institutions of learning, would be of great value to such workers, preparing them to labor for the educated classes, and to meet the prevailing errors of our time. Such was the method pursued by the ancient Waldenses; and, if true to God, our youth, like theirs, might do a good work, even while gaining their education, in sowing the seeds of truth in other minds.

"Be strong, and quit yourselves like men." Ask of Him who suffered reproach, insult, and mockery for your sakes, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" None are too highly educated to become humble disciples of Christ. Those who feel it a privilege to give the best of their life and learning to Him from whom they received them, will shun no labor, no sacrifice, to render back to God in highest service his intrusted talents. In the great battle of life, many of the workers lose sight of the solemnity and sacred character of their mission. The deadly curse of sin continues to blight and deface the moral image of God in them, because they do not work as Christ worked.

We see the need of encouraging higher ideas of education, and of employing more trained men in the ministry. Those who do not obtain the right kind of education before they enter upon God's work, are not competent to accept this holy trust, and to carry forward the work of reformation. Yet all should continue their education after they engage in the work. They must have the word of God abiding in them. We need more cultivation, refinement, and nobility of soul in our laborers. Such an improvement as this would show results in eternity.

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning." "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the

word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." The apostle here links the experience of the fathers with that of the young men; in like manner there is a link between the old disciples in this cause and those who are younger, who have not had an experience in the early events of this message. Those who were young when the message arose, will have to be educated by the old standard-bearers. These teachers must realize that too great pains cannot be taken to fit men for their holy trust, while the standard-bearers are still able to hold the standard aloft. And yet those who have so long fought in the battles may still win victories. They have been so thoroughly acquainted with the wiles of Satan, that they will not be easily moved from the old paths. They remember the days of old. They know Him who is from the beginning. They may ever be light-bearers, faithful witnesses for God, living epistles, known and read of all men.

Let us, then, thank God that a few are left, as was John, to relate their experience in the beginning of this message, and the reception of that which we now hold so dear. But one after another they are falling at their post, and it is only wisdom that we prepare others to take the work where they leave it.

Efforts must be made to fit young men for the work. They must come to the front, to lift burdens and responsibilities. Those who are now young must become strong men. They must be able to plan and give counsel. The word of God abiding in them, will make them pure, and will fill them with faith, hope, courage, and devotion. The work is now greatly retarded because men are carrying responsibilities for which they are unfitted. Shall this great want continue and increase? Shall these great responsibilities drop from the hands of old, experienced workers into the hands of those unable to manage them? Are we not neglecting a very important work by failing to educate and train our youth to fill positions of trust?

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Let the workers be educated, but at the same time let them be meek and lowly of heart. Let us elevate the work to the highest possible standard, ever remembering that if we do our part, God will not fail to do his.

UNHOLY AMBITION.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER N: Although I have received from you no acknowledgment of my last letter, I feel drawn out to write to you again. I have been shown your danger, and cannot forbear to impress upon your minds the necessity of walking humbly with God. You will be safe as long as you have humble views of self. But I know that your souls are in peril. You are seeking for a broader path for your feet than the humble path of holiness, the royal way that leads to the city of God. You have too much of self, and too little of the meekness and lowliness of Christ. You have much self-esteem and self-confidence, and little faith in God. The discordant elements in your nature are largely developed. Unruly passions have a controlling power. Pride and vanity seek for the supremacy. I know that the enemy is tempting you sorely. Your only safety is in entire conformity to the will of God. Submission is necessary on your part; a complete consecration of yourselves to Christ is your only hope of salvation. If you walk in humility of mind before the Lord, then he can work with your efforts, and his strength will be made perfect in your weakness. Christ is our Saviour. He has said for your benefit and for mine, "Without me ye can do nothing." O, will you have more of Jesus, and less of self?

Brother N, you are not naturally devotional, and hence need to make constant efforts to cultivate faith. It is easy for you to drop Christ out of your experience. The Lord has given you his blessing in the past, and how sweet it was to your soul! What comfort, what courage, it gave you! Your passion

is to exalt education, but I speak the truth when I tell you that education, unless balanced by religious principles, will be a power for evil.

I am not willing to look on passively, and see you go as others have gone, in the fatal delusion that Seventh-day Adventists are too narrow in their ideas, are traveling in too obscure a path; that they must needs have greater notoriety, and rise to greater eminence; that the teachers in our schools should give their powers more exclusively to the sciences, and not weave religion into so much of their education. When this seed is dropped into the hearts of students, it will develop rapidly into a harvest which you will not covet to reap.

We are, as it were, on the very borders of the eternal world, and if you do the work in this school for which it was founded, you must educate largely from the Book of all books. You must not exalt any other study above that of the Bible. Other schools in our land are not to be taken as your pattern.

I have been shown that you are charmed with that line of education from which the religious element is almost entirely excluded. There are numerous schools of this order in our land, where students can go if they desire that kind of training. But this school must be of a different character; it must have the mold of God in every department.

Jesus and his love should be interwoven with all the education given, as the very best knowledge the students can have. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." If the principal, in his ambitious projects, soars away from the Source of all wisdom, and thinks that Bible religion will clip his wings, he will find that he amounts to no more than a soap-bubble. Then for your soul's sake, bring the Prince of life into every plan, every organization. You cannot have too much of Jesus or of Scripture history in your school.

Have we the truth? Are we living in the closing period of this earth's history? Is Christ at the door?

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These are questions for us all to settle. Education ought always to be of a high, holy order, and the need is more imperative now than ever before. The removal of the faithful from this world will soon be accomplished. Then why not bring all the energies of mind and soul into entire consecration to God?

Never hide your colors, never put your light under a bushel, or under a bed, but set it on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. Did you and the teachers who were with you at —— watch for opportunities to enlighten others? Did you seek in wisdom to do all the good you possibly could? Did you try to call the attention of those whose acquaintance you formed, to Bible truths? Did you not drag your colors behind you, because you were ashamed to be regarded as God's peculiar people? "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father." If you would only feed on Christ daily, then you could be a true educator.

My brother, there is danger of your trying to communicate too much at one time. You are not required to make lengthy speeches, or to talk upon subjects that will not be understood or appreciated by common people. There is danger of your dwelling upon themes at the very top of the ladder, when those whom you are instructing need to be taught how to climb successfully its first rounds. You talk of things which those unacquainted with our faith cannot comprehend; hence your speeches are not interesting. They are not food for those whom you address.

Jesus was the greatest educator the world ever knew. In comparison with his knowledge, the highest human knowledge is foolishness. But his instructions were so simple that all understood him, both learned and unlearned. He made no effort to show his deep knowledge; for this they could not have understood. You seem to think your long talks have a

special influence to mold and fashion your hearers just as you wish; but you will certainly fail in this. You would have a much better influence if you would talk less and pray more; God is your source of strength.

Your long speeches on education in the sciences are painful to the angels of God, who are constantly and intensely active in seeking to call the thoughts and affections to heavenly things. Souls are perishing while you neglect to work with your intrusted talents as Christ has given you an example. Souls will be lost under your long, Christless speeches. Your own soul is dwarfed and crippled in the knowledge of Christ. You are losing very much because you are blinded by the spirit and customs of an education which will not save the soul.

The youth need your labor. If you were a converted man, daily learning lessons in the school of Christ, then your labors would be a savor of life unto life. Then you could work with patience and love, and in the power of God, for the souls of youth who are exposed to temptation. Devote a portion of the time you consume in long addresses, to personal labor for the youth who need your help. Teach them the claims of God upon them; pray with them. There are many who are bound in evil habits with fetters as firm as steel. The poor victims are fascinated with the charms of Satan's allurements, and are unable to break away, and stand in God-given freedom. They have lost years; shall they lose the year just entered upon? Will the principal of the school awaken to a sense of his responsibilities, and give his mind and heart to the salvation of the students? If not, then let another take his place. Expenses should not run on and on, while nothing, or next to nothing, is done in the very line for which the school was brought into existence.

Shall the powers of mind and soul be misapplied? Shall opportunities be lost? Shall a form and routine be gone through day after day, with nothing

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gained? O, awake, awake! teachers and pupils, before it is too late. Awake before you hear from pale and agonized lips the terrible wail, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved!"

Are the gifts and talents of every educator improved for the very best good of the pupils? Who is watching for a favorable moment to speak words of kindness and love? Who loves to tell the story of Him who so loved the world that he gave his life to redeem lost and perishing sinners? Train the youth, mold the character, educate, educate, educate, for the future, immortal life. Pray often. Plead with God to give you a spirit of supplication. Do not feel that your work as teachers is done unless you can lead your scholars to faith in Jesus and love for him. Let the love of Christ pervade your own souls, and then you will unconsciously teach it to others. When you as instructors commit yourselves unreservedly to Jesus, for him to lead, to guide, to control, you will not fail. Teaching your students to be Christians is the greatest work before you. Go to God; he hears and answers prayer. Put from you questionings, doubts, and unbelief. Let no harshness come into your teaching. Be not too exacting, but cultivate tender sympathy and love. Be cheerful. Do not scold, do not censure too severely; be firm, be broad, be Christ-like, pitiful, courteous. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I cannot express to you the intense desire of my soul that you should all seek the Lord most earnestly while he may be found. We are in the day of God's preparation. Let nothing be regarded as of sufficient worth to draw your minds from the work of preparing for the great day of judgment. Get ready. Let not cold unbelief hold your souls away from God; but let his love burn on the altar of your hearts.

"THE APPEARANCE OF EVIL."

I FEEL urged to address those who are engaged in giving the last message of warning to the world. Whether those for whom they labor see and accept the truth, depends very much upon the individual workers. The command from God is, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord;" and Paul charges Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." The work must commence with the worker; he must be united to Christ as the branch is united to the vine. "I am the vine," said Christ; "ye are the branches." The closest possible connection is here represented. Ingraft the leafless twig upon the flourishing vine stock, and it becomes a living branch, drawing sap and nourishment from the vine. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the sapling clings, until it buds and blossoms and bears fruit. The sapless twig represents the sinner. When united to Christ, soul is joined to soul, the feeble and finite to the holy and infinite, and man becomes one with Christ.

"Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." Are we who claim to be workers with Christ, united to him? Do we abide in Christ? and are we one with him? The message that we bear is world-wide. It must come before all nations, tongues, and peoples. The Lord will not require any one of us to go forth with this message, without giving us grace and power to present it to the people in a manner corresponding to its importance. The great question with us to-day is, Are we carrying to the world this solemn message of truth in a way to show its importance? The Lord will work with the laborers if they will make Christ their only dependence. He never designed that his missionaries should work without his grace, destitute of his power.

Christ has chosen us out of the world, that we might be a peculiar and holy people. He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all

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iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." God's workers must be men of prayer, diligent students of the Scriptures, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that they may be a light and strength to others. Our God is a jealous God; and he requires us to worship him in spirit and in truth, in the beauty of holiness. The psalmist says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." As workers, we must take heed to our ways. If the psalmist could not be heard if he regarded iniquity in his heart, how can the prayers of men now be heard while iniquity is regarded by them?

After the passing of the time in 1844, fanaticism came into the ranks of Adventists. God gave messages of warning to stay the incoming evil. There was too great familiarity between some men and women. I presented to them the holy standard of truth that we should reach, and the purity of deportment that we should maintain, in order to meet the approval of God and be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Most solemn denunciations from God were given to men and women whose thoughts were running in an impure channel, while they claimed to be especially favored by God; but the message which God gave was despised and rejected. They turned upon me, and said, "Has God spoken only by you, and not by us?" They did not amend their ways, and the Lord suffered them to go on till defilement marked their lives.

We are not out of danger even now. Every soul who engages to give to the world the message of warning, will be sorely tempted to pursue such a course in life as will deny his faith. It is Satan's studied plan to make the workers weak in prayer, weak in power, and weak in influence, because of their defects of character. We, as workers, must be united in frowning down and condemning everything that bears the least approach to evil, in our associations with one another. Our faith is holy; our work

is to vindicate the honor of God's law, and is not of a character to bring any one down to a low level in thought or in deportment.

There is an exalted platform for us to stand upon. We must believe and teach the truth as it is in Jesus. Holiness of heart will never lead to impure actions. When one who claims to be teaching the truth is inclined to be much in the company of young or even married women, when he familiarly lays his hand upon them, or is often conversing with them in a familiar manner, be afraid of him; the pure principles of truth are not inwrought in his soul. Such are not in Christ, and Christ is not abiding in them. They need a thorough conversion, before God can accept their labors. The truth of heavenly origin never degrades the receiver, never leads him to the least approach to undue familiarity; on the contrary, it sanctifies the believer, refines his taste, elevates and ennobles him, and brings him into a close connection with Jesus. It leads him to regard the apostle Paul's injunction to abstain from even the appearance of evil, lest his "good should be evil spoken of."

This is a subject to which we must give heed. We must guard against the sins of this degenerate age. We must stand aloof from everything that savors of undue familiarity. God condemns it. It is forbidden ground, upon which it is unsafe to set the feet. Every word and action should tend to elevate, refine, and ennoble the character. There is sin in thoughtlessness about such matters. The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to diligence and thoroughness in his ministry, and urged him to meditate upon those things that were pure and excellent, that his profiting might appear unto all. The same counsel is greatly needed by young men of the present age. Thoughtful consideration is essential. If men would only think more, and act less impulsively, they would meet with much greater success in their labors. We are handling subjects of infinite importance, and we cannot afford to weave into our work our own defects of char-

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acter. We want to represent the character of Christ.

We have a great work to do to elevate men and win them to Christ, to lead them to choose and earnestly seek to be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Every thought, every word, and every action of the workers should be of that elevated character which is in harmony with the sacred truth they advocate. It may be that men and women will necessarily be united more or less in our important mission fields. If this is the case, they cannot be too circumspect. Let married men be reserved and guarded, that no evil may truthfully be said of them. We are living in an age when iniquity abounds, and an unguarded word or improper action may greatly injure the usefulness of the one who shows this weakness. Let the workers keep up the barriers of reserve; let not one instance occur of which the enemy can make capital. If they begin to place their affections upon one another, giving special attention to favorites, and using flattering words, God will withdraw his Spirit.

If married men go into the work, leaving their wives to care for the children at home, the wife and mother is doing fully as great and important a work as the husband and father. Although one is in the missionary field, the other is a home missionary, whose cares and anxieties and burdens frequently far exceed those of the husband and father. Her work is a solemn and important one, — to mold the minds and fashion the characters of her children, to train them for usefulness here, and fit them for the future, immortal life. The husband in the open missionary field may receive the honors of men, while the home toiler may receive no earthly credit for her labor. But if she works for the best interest of her family, seeking to fashion their characters after the divine Model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world. God does not see things as man's finite vision views them. How careful should the husband and father be to maintain his loyalty to his marriage vows. How circumspect should be his character, lest he shall encourage thoughts in young girls, or even in married women, that are not in accordance with the high, holy standard, — the commandments of God. Those commandments Christ shows to be exceedingly broad, reaching even the thoughts, intents, and purposes of the heart. Here is where many are delinquent. Their heart imaginings are not of the pure, holy character which God requires; and however high their calling, however talented they may be, God will mark iniquity against them, and will count them as far more guilty and deserving of his wrath than those who have less talent, less light, less influence.

I am pained when I see men praised, flattered, and petted. God has revealed to me the fact that some who receive these attentions are unworthy to take his name upon their lips; yet they are exalted to heaven in the estimation of finite beings, who read only from outward appearance. My sisters, never pet and flatter poor, fallible, erring men, either young or old, married or unmarried. You know not their weaknesses, and you know not but that these very attentions and this profuse praise may prove their ruin. I am alarmed at the short-sightedness, the want of wisdom, that many manifest in this respect.

Men who are doing God's work, and who have Christ abiding in their hearts, will not lower the standard of morality, but will ever seek to elevate it. They will not find pleasure in the flattery of women, or in being petted by them. Let men, both single and married, say, "Hands off! I will never give the least occasion that my good should be evil spoken of. My good name is capital of far more value to me than gold or silver. Let me preserve it untarnished. If men assail that name, it shall not be because I have given them occasion to do so, but for the same reason that they spoke evil of Christ, — because they hated the purity and holiness of his character; for it was a constant rebuke to them."

I wish I could impress upon every worker in God's

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cause, the great need of continual, earnest prayer. They cannot be constantly upon their knees, but they can be uplifting their hearts to God. This is the way that Enoch walked with God. Be careful lest self-sufficiency come in, and you drop Jesus out, and work in your own strength rather than in the spirit and strength of the Master. Do not waste golden moments in frivolous conversation. When you return from doing missionary work, do not praise yourself, but exalt Jesus; lift up the cross of Calvary. Allow no one to praise or flatter you, or to cling to your hand as if loth to let it go. Be afraid of every such demonstration. When young or even married persons show a disposition to open their family secrets to you, beware. When they express a desire for sympathy, know that it is time to exercise great caution. Those who are imbued with the spirit of Christ, and who are walking with God, will have no unholy pining for sympathy. They have a companionship that satisfies every desire of the mind and heart. Married men who accept the attention, the praise and petting, of women, should be assured that the love and sympathy of this class are not worth the obtaining.

Women are too often tempters. On one pretense or another, they engage the attention of men, married or unmarried, and lead them on till they transgress the law of God, till their usefulness is ruined, and their souls are in jeopardy. The history of Joseph is left on record for the benefit of all who, like him, are tempted. In principle he was firm as a rock, and he answered the tempter, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Moral power like his is what is needed now. If women would only elevate their lives, and become workers with Christ, there would be less danger through their influence; but with their present feelings of unconcern in regard to home responsibilities, and in regard to the claims that God has upon them, their influence is often strong in the wrong direction, their powers are

dwarfed, and their work does not bear the divine impress. They are not home missionaries, neither are they missionaries away from home; and frequently home, precious home, is left to desolation.

Let every one who professes Christ, seek to overcome all unmanliness, all weakness and folly. Some men never grow up to the full stature of men in Christ Jesus. They are childish and self-indulgent. Humble piety would correct all this. Pure religion possesses no characteristics of childish self-indulgence. It is honorable in the highest degree. Then let not one of those who have enlisted as soldiers of Christ be ready to faint in the day of trial. All should feel that they have earnest work to do to elevate their fellow-men. Not one has a right to rest from the warfare to make virtue desirable, and vice hated. There is no rest for the living Christian this side of the eternal world. To obey God's commandments is to do right and only right. This is Christian manliness. But many need to take frequent lessons from the life of Christ, who is the author and finisher of our faith. "Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." You are to show a growth in the Christian graces. By manifesting meekness under provocation, and growing away from low earthliness, you give evidence that you have an indwelling Saviour, and every thought, word, and deed attracts men to Jesus rather than to self. There is a great amount of work to be done, and but little time in which to do it. Let it be your life-work to inspire all with the thought that they have a work to do for Christ. Wherever there are duties to be done which others do not understand because they do not wish to see their life-work, accept them, and do them.

The standard of morality is not exalted high enough among God's people. Many who profess to be keeping God's commandments, and standing in their de-

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fense, are breaking them. Temptations present themselves in such a way that the tempted think they see an excuse to transgress. Those who enter the missionary field should be men and women who walk and talk with God. Those who stand as ministers in the sacred desk should be men of blameless reputation; their lives should be spotless, above everything that savors of impurity. Do not place your reputation in jeopardy by going in the way of temptation. If a woman lingeringly holds your hand, quickly withdraw it, and save her from sin. If she manifests undue affection, and mourns that her husband does not love her and sympathize with her, do not try to supply this lack. Your only safe and wise course in such a case is to keep your sympathy to yourself. Such cases are numerous. Point such souls to the Burden-bearer, the true and safe Counselor. If she has chosen Christ as a companion, he will give her grace to bear neglect without repining; meanwhile she should diligently do all in her power to bind her husband to herself by strictest fidelity to him, and faithfulness in making his home cheerful and attractive. If all her efforts are unavailing and unappreciated, she will have the sympathy and aid of her blessed Redeemer. He will help her to bear all her burdens, and comfort her in her disappointments. She shows distrust of Jesus when she reaches for human objects to supply the place that Christ is ever ready to fill. In her repining, she sins against God. She would do well to examine her own heart critically, to see if sin is not lurking in the soul. The heart that thus seeks human sympathy and accepts forbidden attentions from any one, is not pure and faultless before God.

The Bible affords many striking illustrations of the strong influence of evil-minded women. When Baalam was called upon to curse Israel, he was not permitted to do so; for "the Lord had not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither had he seen perverseness in Israel." But Baalam, who had already yielded to

temptation, now became fully the agent of Satan; and he determined to accomplish indirectly what God had not permitted him to do directly. He at once laid a snare whereby Israel should be enchanted with the beautiful Moabitish women, who would lead them to transgress God's law. Thus iniquity would be found in them, and God's blessing would not rest upon them. Their forces would be greatly weakened, and their enemies would no longer fear their power, because the presence of the Lord of hosts was not with their armies.

This is intended as a warning to the people of God living in the last days. If they follow after righteousness and true holiness, if they keep all the commandments of God, Satan and his agents will not be permitted to overcome them. All the opposition of their bitterest foes will prove powerless to destroy or uproot the vine of God's own planting. Satan understands what Baalam learned by sad experience, that there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither divination against Israel, while iniquity is not cherished among them; therefore his power and influence will ever be employed to mar their unity and defile the purity of their characters. His snares are laid in a thousand ways to weaken their power for good.

Again I urge upon you the necessity of purity in every thought, in every word, in every action. We have an individual accountability to God, an individual work, which no one can do for us: it is to make the world better by precept, by personal effort, and by example. While we should cultivate sociability, let it not be merely for amusement, but for a purpose. There are souls to save. Come near to them by personal effort. Open your doors to young men who are exposed to temptation. Evil invites them on every hand. Seek to interest them. If they are full of faults, seek to correct these errors. Do not hold yourselves aloof from them, but come close to them. Bring them to your firesides; invite them to your family altars. There is work that thousands need to

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have done for them. Every tree in Satan's garden is hung with tempting, poisonous fruit, and a woe is pronounced upon every one who plucks and eats. Let us remember the claims of God upon us to make the path to heaven clear and bright and attractive, that we may win souls away from Satan's destructive enchantments.

God has given us reason, to be used for a noble purpose. We are here as probationers for the next life. It is too solemn a period for any of us to be careless or to move in uncertainty. Our intercourse with others should be characterized by sobriety and heavenly-mindedness. Our conversation should be upon heavenly things. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

What is more worthy to engross the mind than the plan of redemption? It is a subject that is exhaustless. The love of Jesus, the salvation offered to fallen man through his infinite love, holiness of heart, the precious, saving truth for these last days, the grace of Christ,—these are subjects which may animate the soul, and cause the pure in heart to feel that joy which the disciples felt when Jesus came and walked with them as they traveled toward Emmaus. He who has centered his affections upon Christ will relish this kind of hallowed association, and will gather divine strength by such intercourse; but he who has no relish for this kind of conversation, and who is best pleased to talk sentimental nonsense, has wandered far away from God, and is becoming dead to holy and noble aspirations. The sensual, the earthly, is interpreted by such to be heavenly. When the conversation is of a frivolous character, and savors of a dissatisfied reaching out after human sympathy and appreciation, it springs

from love-sick sentimentalism, and neither the youth nor the men with gray hairs are secure. When the truth of God is an abiding principle in the heart, it will be like a living spring. Attempts may be made to repress it, but it will gush forth in another place; it is there, and cannot be repressed. The truth in the heart is a well-spring of life. It refreshes the weary, and restrains vile thought and utterance.

Is there not enough taking place about us to show us the dangers that beset our path? Everywhere are seen wrecks of humanity, neglected family altars, broken-up families. There is a strange abandonment of principle, a lowering of the standard of morality; the sins are fast increasing which caused the judgments of God to be poured upon the earth in the flood and in the destruction of Sodom by fire. We are nearing the end. God has borne long with the perversity of mankind, but their punishment is no less certain. Let those who profess to be the light of the world, depart from all iniquity. We see the very same spirit manifested against the truth that was seen in Christ's day. For want of Bible arguments, those who are making void the law of God will manufacture falsehoods to stain and blacken the workers. They did this to the world's Redeemer; they will do it to his followers. Reports that have not the least foundation will be asserted as truth.

God has blessed his commandment-keeping people, and all the opposition and falsehoods that may be brought against them will only strengthen those who stand firm in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints. But if those who profess to be the depositaries of God's law become transgressors of that law, his protecting care will be withdrawn, and many will fall through perverseness and licentiousness. Then we shall indeed be unable to stand before our enemies. But if his people remain separate and distinct from the world, as a nation that do righteousness, God will be their defense, and no weapons formed against them shall prosper.

In view of the dangers of this time, shall not we,

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as God's commandment-keeping people, put away from among us all sin, all iniquity, all perverseness? Shall not the women professing the truth keep strict guard over themselves, lest the least encouragement be given to unwarrantable familiarity? They may close many a door of temptation if they will observe at all times strict reserve and propriety of deportment. Let men find an example in the life of Joseph, and stand firm in principle, however strongly tempted. We want to be strong men and women for the right. There are those around us who are weak in moral power. They need to be in the company of those who are firm, and whose hearts are closely knit with the heart of Christ. Every one's principles will be put to the test. But there are those who go into temptation like a fool to the correction of stocks. They invite the enemy to tempt them. They unnerve themselves, are weakened in moral power, and shame and confusion are the result.

How contemptible in the sight of a holy God are those who profess to stand in vindication of his law, and yet violate its precepts! They bring reproach upon the precious cause, and give the opposers of truth occasion to triumph. Never should the mark of distinction between the followers of Jesus and the followers of Satan be obliterated. There is a distinct line drawn by God himself between the world and the church, between commandment-keepers and commandment-breakers. They do not blend together. They are as different as midday and midnight, — different in their tastes, their aims, their pursuits, their characters. If we cultivate the love and fear of God, we shall loathe the least approach to impurity.

May the Lord attract souls to himself, and impart to them individually a sense of their sacred responsibility to form such characters that Christ will not be ashamed to call them brethren. Elevate the standard, and then the heavenly benediction will be pronounced upon you in that day when every man will receive according to the deeds done in the body.

Workers for God must live as in his sight, and be constantly developing in character, in true virtue and godliness. Their minds and hearts must be so thoroughly imbued with the Spirit of Christ, and so solemnized by the sacred message they have to bear, that every thought, every action, every motive, will be above the earthly and sensual. Their happiness will not be in forbidden, selfish gratifications, but in Jesus and his love.

My prayer is, "O Lord, anoint the eyes of thy people, that they may discern between sin and holiness, between pollution and righteousness, and come off victors at last."

LOVE FOR THE ERRING.

CHRIST came to bring salvation within the reach of all. Upon the cross of Calvary he paid the infinite redemption-price for a lost world. His self-denial and self-sacrifice, his unselfish labor, his humiliation, above all, the offering up of his life, testifies to the depth of his love for fallen man. It was to seek and to save the lost that he came to earth. His mission was to sinners, — sinners of every grade, of every tongue and nation. He paid the price for all, to ransom them, and bring them into union and sympathy with himself. The most erring, the most sinful, were not passed by; his labors were especially for those who most needed the salvation he came to bring. The greater their need of reform, the deeper was his interest, the greater his sympathy, and the more earnest his labors. His great heart of love was stirred to its depths for the ones whose condition was most hopeless, and who most needed his transforming grace.

In the parable of the lost sheep is represented the wonderful love of Christ for the erring, wandering ones. He does not choose to remain with those who accept his salvation, bestowing all his efforts upon

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them, and receiving their gratitude and love. The true shepherd leaves the flock that love him, and goes out into the wilderness, enduring hardship and facing danger and death, to seek and save the sheep that has wandered from the fold, and that must perish if not brought back. When after diligent search the lost is found, the shepherd, though suffering from weariness, pain, and hunger, does not leave it in its weakness to follow him, he does not drive it along, but, O wondrous love! he tenderly gathers it in his arms, and placing it upon his shoulder, bears it back to the fold. Then he calls upon his neighbors to rejoice with him over the lost that is found.

The parable of the prodigal son, and that of the lost piece of silver, teach the same lesson. Every soul that is especially imperiled by falling into temptation, causes pain to the heart of Christ, and calls forth his tenderest sympathy and most earnest labor. Over one sinner that repenteth his joy is greater than over the ninety and nine who need no repentance.

These lessons are for our benefit. Christ has enjoined upon his disciples that they co-operate with him in his work, that they love one another as he has loved them. The agony which he endured upon the cross testifies to the estimate he places upon the human soul. All who accept this great salvation, pledge themselves to be co-workers with him. None are to consider themselves special favorites of Heaven, and center their interest and attention upon self. All who have enlisted in the service of Christ are to work as he worked, and are to love those who are in ignorance and sin, even as he loved them.

But there has been among us as a people a lack of deep, earnest, soul-touching sympathy and love for the tempted and the erring. Many have manifested great coldness and sinful neglect, represented by Christ as passing by on the other side, keeping as far as possible from those who most need help. The newly converted soul often has fierce conflicts with established habits, or with some special form of

temptation, and being overcome by some master passion or tendency, he is guilty of indiscretion or actual wrong. It is then that energy, tact, and wisdom are required of his brethren, that he may be restored to spiritual health. In such cases the instructions of God's word apply: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." But how little of the pitying tenderness of Christ is manifested by his professed followers! When one errs, others too often feel at liberty to make the case appear as bad as possible. Those who perhaps are guilty of fully as great sins in some other direction, will treat their brother with cruel severity. Errors committed through ignorance, thoughtlessness, or weakness, are exaggerated into willful, premeditated sin. As they see souls going astray, some fold their hands, and say, "I told you so. I knew there was no dependence to be placed upon them." Thus they place themselves in the attitude of Satan, exulting in spirit that their evil surmisings have proved to be correct.

We must expect to meet and bear with great imperfections in those who are young and inexperienced. Christ has bidden us seek to restore such in the spirit of meekness, and he holds us responsible for pursuing a course which will drive them to discouragement, despair, and ruin. Unless we daily cultivate the precious plant of love, we are in danger of becoming narrow, unsympathetic, bigoted, and critical, esteeming ourselves righteous when we are far from being approved of God. Some are uncourteous, abrupt, and harsh. They are like chestnut burs; they prick whenever touched. These do incalculable harm by misrepresenting our loving Saviour.

We must come up to a higher standard, or we are unworthy of the Christian name. We should cultivate the spirit with which Christ labored to save the

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erring. They are as dear to him as we are. They are equally capable of being trophies of his grace, and heirs of the kingdom. But they are exposed to the snares of a wily foe, exposed to danger and defilement, and without the saving grace of Christ, to certain ruin. Did we view this matter in the right light, how would our zeal be quickened, and our earnest, self-sacrificing efforts be multiplied, that we might come close to those who need our help, our prayers, our sympathy, and our love!

Let those who have been remiss in this work, consider their duty in the light of the great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This obligation is resting upon all. All are required to labor to diminish the ills and multiply the blessings of their fellow-creatures. If we are strong to resist temptation, we are under the greater obligation to help those who are weak and yielding. Have we knowledge, we should instruct the ignorant. Has God blessed us with this world's goods, it is our duty to succor the poor. We must work for others' good. Let all within the sphere of our influence be partakers of whatever of excellence we may possess. None should be content to feed on the bread of life without sharing it with those around them.

Those only live for Christ and honor his name who are true to their Master in seeking to save that which is lost. Genuine piety will surely manifest the deep longing and earnest labor of the crucified Saviour to save those for whom he died. If our hearts are softened and subdued by the grace of Christ, and glowing with a sense of God's goodness and love, there will be a natural outflow of love, sympathy, and tenderness to others. The truth exemplified in the life will exert its power, like the hidden leaven, upon all with whom it is brought in contact.

God has ordained that in order to grow in grace and in a knowledge of Christ, men must follow his example, and work as he worked. It will often require a struggle to control our own feelings, and to refrain from speaking in a manner to discourage those who are laboring under temptation. A life of daily prayer and praise, a life which will shed light upon the path of others, cannot be maintained without earnest effort. But such effort will yield precious fruit, blessing not only the receiver, but the giver. The spirit of unselfish labor for others gives depth, stability, and Christlike loveliness to the character, and brings peace and happiness to its possessor. The aspirations are elevated. There is no room for sloth or selfishness. Those who exercise the Christian graces will grow. They will have spiritual sinew and muscle, and will be strong to work for God. They will have clear spiritual perceptions, a steady, increasing faith, and prevailing power in prayer. Those who are watching for souls, who devote themselves most fully to the salvation of the erring, are most surely working out their own salvation.

But how has this work been neglected! If the thoughts and affections were wholly given to God, think you that souls in error, under the temptations of Satan, would be dropped as carelessly and unfeelingly as they have been? Would not greater efforts be put forth, in the love and simplicity of Christ, to save these wandering ones? All who are truly consecrated to God will engage with the greatest zeal in the work for which he has done the most, for which he has made an infinite sacrifice, — the work for the salvation of souls. This is the special work to be cherished and sustained, and never allowed to flag.

God calls upon his people to arise, and come out of the chilling, frosty atmosphere in which they have been living, to shake off the impressions and ideas that have frozen up the impulses of love, and held them in selfish inactivity. He bids them come up from their low, earthly level, and breathe in the clear, sunny atmosphere of heaven.

Our meetings for worship should be sacred, precious occasions. The prayer-meeting is not a place where brethren are to censure and condemn one

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another, where there are to be unkind feelings and hard speeches. Christ will be driven from the assemblies where this spirit is manifested, and Satan will come in to take the lead. Nothing that savors of an unchristian, unloving spirit should be permitted to enter; for do we not assemble to seek mercy and forgiveness from the Lord? and the Saviour has plainly said, "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Who can stand before God, and plead a faultless character, a blameless life? And how, then, dare any criticise and condemn their brethren? Those who themselves can hope for salvation only through the merits of Christ, who must seek forgiveness by virtue of his blood, are under the strongest obligation to exercise love, pity, and forgiveness toward their fellow-sinners.

Brethren, unless you educate yourselves to respect the place of devotion, you will receive no blessing from God. You may worship him in form, but there will be no spiritual service. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," says Jesus, "there am I in the midst of them." All should feel that they are in the divine presence, and instead of dwelling upon the faults and errors of others, they should be diligently searching their own hearts. If you have confessions to make of your own sins, do your duty, and leave others to do theirs.

When you indulge your own harshness of character by manifesting a hard, unfeeling spirit, you are repulsing the very ones whom you should win. Your harshness destroys their love of assembling together, and too often results in driving them from the truth. You should realize that you yourselves are under the rebuke of God. While you condemn others, the Lord condemns you. You have a duty to do to confess your own unchristian conduct. May the Lord move upon the hearts of the individual members of the church, until his transforming grace shall be revealed in the life and the character. Then

when you assemble together, it will not be to criticise one another, but to talk of Jesus and his love.

Our meetings should be made intensely interesting. They should be pervaded with the very atmosphere of heaven. Let there be no long, dry speeches and formal prayers, merely for the sake of occupying the time. All should be ready to act their part with promptness, and when their duty is done, the meeting should be closed. Thus the interest will be kept up to the last. This is offering to God acceptable worship. His service should be made interesting and attractive, and not be allowed to degenerate into a dry form. We must live for Christ minute by minute, hour by hour, and day by day; then Christ will dwell in us, and when we meet together, his love will be in our hearts, welling up like a spring in the desert, refreshing all, and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the waters of life.

We are not to depend upon two or three members to do the work for the whole church. We must individually have a strong, active faith, carrying forward the work God has left us to do. There must be an intense, living interest to inquire of God, "What wilt thou have me to do? How shall I do my work for time and for eternity?" We must individually bend all our powers to search for the truth, employing every means within our reach that will aid us in a diligent, prayerful investigation of the Scriptures; and then we must be sanctified through the truth, that we may save souls.

An earnest effort should be made in every church to put away evil-speaking and a censorious spirit as among the sins productive of the greatest evils in the church. Severity and fault-finding must be rebuked as the workings of Satan. Mutual love and confidence must be encouraged and strengthened in the members of the church. Let all, in the fear of God and with love to their brethren, close their ears to gossip and censure. Direct the tale-bearer to the teachings of God's word. Bid him obey the Script-

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ures, and carry his complaints directly to those whom he thinks in error. This united action would bring a flood of light into the church, and close the door to a flood of evil. Thus God would be glorified, and many souls would be saved.

The admonition of the True Witness to the Sardis church is: "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent." The sin especially charged against this church is that they have not strengthened the things that remain, that are ready to die. Does this warning apply to us? Let us individually examine our hearts in the light of God's word, and let our first work be to set our hearts in order by the help of Christ.

God has done his part of the work for the salvation of men, and now he calls for the co-operation of the church. There are the blood of Christ, the word of truth, the Holy Spirit, on one hand, and there are the perishing souls on the other. Every follower of Christ has a part to act to bring men to accept the blessings Heaven has provided. Let us closely examine ourselves, and see if we have done this work. Let us question our motives, and every action of our lives. Are there not many unpleasant pictures hanging in memory's halls? Often have you needed the forgiveness of Jesus. You have been constantly dependent upon his compassion and love. Yet have you not failed to manifest toward others the spirit which Christ has exercised toward you? Have you felt a burden for the one whom you saw venturing into forbidden paths? Have you kindly admonished him? Have you wept for him, and prayed with him and for him? Have you shown by words of tenderness and kindly acts that you love him, and desire to save him? As you have associated with those who were faltering and staggering under the load of their

own infirmities of disposition and faulty habits, have you left them to fight the battles alone, when you might have given them help? Have you not passed these sorely tempted ones by on the other side, while the world has stood ready to give them sympathy, and to allure them into Satan's nets? Have you not, like Cain, been ready to say, "Am I my brother's keeper?" How must the great Head of the church regard the work of your life? How does He to whom every soul is precious, as the purchase of his blood, look upon your indifference to those who stray from the right path? Are you not afraid that he will leave you just as you leave them? Be sure that He who is the true Watchman of the Lord's house has marked every neglect.

Have not Christ and his love been shut out from your life, until a mechanical form has taken the place of heart service? Where is the kindling of soul you once felt at the mention of the name of Jesus? In the freshness of your early dedication, how fervent was your love for souls! how earnestly you sought to represent to them the Saviour's love! The absence of that love has made you cold, critical, exacting. Seek to win it back, and then labor to bring souls to Christ. If you refuse to do this, others who have had less light and experience and fewer opportunities, will come up and take your place, and do that which you have neglected; for the work must be done to save the tempted, the tried, the perishing. Christ offers the service to his church; who will accept it?

God has not been unmindful of the good deeds, the self-denying acts, of the church in the past. All are registered on high. But these are not enough. These will not save the church when she ceases to fulfill her mission. Unless the cruel neglect and indifference manifested in the past shall cease, the church, instead of going from strength to strength, will continue to degenerate into weakness and formality. Shall we let this be? Is the dull torpor, the

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mournful deterioration in love and spiritual zeal, to be perpetuated? Is this the condition in which Christ is to find his church?

Brethren, your own lamps will surely flicker and grow dim until they go out in darkness unless you make decided efforts to reform. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." The opportunity now presented may be short. If this season of grace and repentance passes unimproved, the warning is given, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place." These words are uttered by the lips of the long-suffering, forbearing One. They are a solemn warning to churches and individuals that the Watcher who never slumbers is measuring their course of action. It is only by reason of his marvelous patience that they are not cut down as cumberers of the ground. But his Spirit will not always strive. His patience will wait but little longer.

Your faith must be something more than it has been, or you will be weighed in the balances and found wanting. At the last day, the final decision by the Judge of all the earth will turn upon our interest in, and practical labor for, the needy, the oppressed, the tempted. You cannot always pass these by on the other side, and yourselves find entrance as redeemed sinners into the city of God. "Inasmuch," says Christ, "as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

It is not yet too late to redeem the neglects of the past. Let there be a revival of the first love, the first ardor. Search out the ones you have driven away, bind up by confession the wounds you have made. Come close to the great Heart of pitying love, and let the current of that divine compassion flow into your heart, and from you to the hearts of others. Let the tenderness and mercy that Jesus has revealed in his own precious life be an example to us of the manner in which we should treat our fellow-beings,

especially those who are our brethren in Christ. Many have fainted and become discouraged in the great struggle of life, whom one word of kindly cheer and courage would have strengthened to overcome. Never, never become heartless, cold, unsympathetic, and censorious. Never lose an opportunity to say a word to encourage and inspire hope. We cannot tell how far-reaching may be our tender words of kindness, our Christlike efforts to lighten some burden. The erring can be restored in no other way than in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tender love.

"Wouldst thou an erring soul redeem,
And lead a lost one back to God?
Wouldst thou a guardian angel seem
To one who long in guilt has trod?
Go kindly to him, take his hand,
With gentle words, within thine own,
And by his side a brother stand,
Till thou the demon sin dethrone.

"Scorn not the guilty then, but plead
With him in kindest, gentlest mood,
And back the lost one thou mayst lead
To God, humanity, and good.
Thou art thyself but man, and thou
Art weak, perchance to fall as he;
Then mercy to the fallen show,
That mercy may be shown to thee."

CHURCH DUTIES.

WHERE the Spirit of the Lord is, there is meekness, patience, gentleness, and long-suffering. A true disciple of Christ will seek to imitate the Pattern. He will study to do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven. Those whose hearts are still defiled with sin, cannot be zealous of good works. They fail to keep the first four precepts of the decalogue, defining the duty of man to God; neither do they

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keep the last six, defining the duty of man to his fellow-men. Their hearts are filled with selfishness, and they are constantly finding fault with others who are better than themselves. They put their hands to a work which God has not given them, but leave undone the work he has left for them to do, which is to take heed to themselves, lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble the church and defile it. They turn their eyes outward, to watch lest the character of others should not be right, when their eyes should be turned inward, to scan and criticise their own actions. When they empty the heart of self, envy, evil surmising, malice, they will not be climbing on the judgment-seat, and pronouncing sentence upon others who are in God's sight better than they.

He who would reform others, must first reform himself. He must obtain the spirit of his Master, and be willing, like him, to suffer reproach, and to practice self-denial. In comparison with the worth of one soul, the whole world sinks into insignificance. A desire to exercise authority, to lord it over God's heritage, will, if indulged, result in the loss of souls. Those who really love Jesus, will seek to conform their own lives to the Pattern, and will labor in his spirit for the salvation of others.

In order to secure man to himself, and insure his eternal salvation, Christ left the royal courts of heaven, and came to this earth, endured the agonies of sin and shame in man's stead, and died to make him free. In view of the infinite price paid for man's redemption, how dare any professing the name of Christ treat with indifference one of his little ones? How carefully should brethren and sisters in the church guard every word and action, lest they hurt the oil and the wine! How patiently, kindly, and affectionately should they deal with the purchase of the blood of Christ! How faithfully and earnestly should they labor to lift up the desponding and the discouraged! How tenderly should they treat those who are trying to obey the truth, and have no encouragement at home, who have constantly to breathe the atmosphere of unbelief and darkness!

TREATMENT OF THE ERRING.

If a brother is supposed to have erred, his brethren and sisters should not whisper it among themselves and comment upon it, magnifying these supposed errors and faults. Much of this work is done, and the result is, the displeasure of God rests upon those who do it, and Satan exults that he can weaken and annoy those who might be strong in the Lord. The world sees their weakness, and judges this class and the truth they profess to love, by the fruits manifested in them.

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." Here the backbiter is excluded from abiding in the tabernacle of God, and dwelling in the holy hill of Zion. He that taketh up a reproach against his neighbor cannot receive the approval of God.

How many ministers, while engaged in a good work in which souls are turning to God and to the truth, are called away to settle some church trial among brethren who were wholly wrong themselves, and who had a contentious and overbearing spirit?

This work of withdrawing men from their fields of labor has been repeated again and again in the progress of this cause. It is a device of the great adversary of man to hinder the work of God. When souls that are upon the point of deciding in favor of

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the truth are thus left to unfavorable influences, they lose their interest, and it is very rarely that so powerful an impression can again be made upon them. Satan is ever seeking some device to call the minister from his field of labor at this critical point, that the result of his labors may be lost.

There are in the church unconsecrated, unconverted men and women who think more of maintaining their own dignity and their own opinions than they do of the salvation of their fellow-creatures; and Satan works upon these to stir up difficulties that consume the time and labor of the minister, and many souls are lost as the result.

While the members of the church are in a divided state of feeling, their hearts are hard and unimpressible. The efforts of the minister are like blows upon cold iron, and each party becomes more set in his own way than before. The minister is placed in a most unenviable position; for, though he should decide ever so wisely, his decision must displease some one, and thus the party spirit is strengthened.

If the minister makes his home with some one family, others are sure to be jealous lest he shall receive impressions unfavorable to themselves. If he gives counsel, some will say, "Such a one has been talking with him," and his words have no weight with them. Thus their souls are armed with distrust and evil surmising, and the minister is left at the mercy of their prejudices and jealousies. Too often he leaves the matter worse than he found it. Had he utterly refused to listen to the colored, one-sided statements of any, had he given words of advice in accordance with the Bible rule, and said, like Nehemiah, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down," that church would have been in a far better condition.

Ministers and lay members of the church displease God when they allow individuals to tell them the errors and faults of their brethren. They should not listen to these reports, but should inquire, "Have you strictly followed the injunctions of your Saviour? Have you gone to the offender, and told him his faults between you and him alone? And has he refused to hear you? Have you carefully and prayerfully taken two or three others, and labored with him in tenderness, humility, and meekness, your heart throbbing with love for his soul?" If the Captain's orders, in the rules given for the erring, have been strictly followed, then an advance step is to be taken, — tell it to the church, and let action be taken in the case according to the Scriptures. Then it is that Heaven will ratify the decision made by the church in cutting off the offending member if he does not repent. If these steps have not been taken, close the ear to complaints, and thus refuse to take up a reproach against your neighbor. If there were no brethren and sisters to do this, evil tongues would soon cease; for they would not find so favorable a field in which to work in biting and devouring one another.

SELECTION OF LEADERS.

The apostle Paul writes to Titus: "Set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee; if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God." It would be well for all our ministers to give heed to these words, and not to hurry men into office without due consideration, and much prayer that God would designate by his Holy Spirit whom he will accept.

Said the inspired apostle, "Lay hands suddenly on no man." In some of our churches the work of organizing and of ordaining elders has been premature; the Bible rule has been disregarded, and consequently grievous trouble has been brought upon the church. There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for the responsible work, — men who need to be converted, elevated, ennobled, and refined, before they can serve the cause of God in any capacity.

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The gospel net gathers both good and bad. It takes time for character to be developed; there must be time to learn what men really are. The family of the one suggested for office should be considered. Are they in subjection? Can the man rule his own house with honor? What character have his children? Will they do honor to the father's influence? If he has no tact, wisdom, or power of godliness at home, in managing his own family, it is safe to conclude that the same defects will be carried into the church, and the same unsanctified management will be seen there. It will be far better to criticise the man before he is put into office than afterward; better to pray and counsel before taking the decisive step, than to labor to correct the consequences of a wrong move.

In some churches the leader has not the right qualifications to educate the members of the church to be workers. Tact and judgment have not been used to keep up a living interest in the work of God. The leader is slow and tedious; he talks too much and prays too long in public; he has not that living connection with God which would give him a fresh experience.

The leaders of churches in every place should be earnest, full of zeal and unselfish interest; men of God, who can give the right mold to the work. They should make their requests to God in faith. They may devote all the time they wish to secret prayer, but in public they should make their prayers and their testimonies short and to the point. Long, dry prayers and long exhortations should be avoided. If the brethren and sisters would have something to say that will refresh and edify others, it must first be in their hearts. They must daily be connected with God, drawing their supplies from his exhaustless store-house, and bringing therefrom things new and old. If their own souls have been vivified by the Spirit of God, they will cheer, strengthen, and encourage others; but if they have not drank at the

living fountain of salvation themselves, they will not know how to lead others there.

The necessity of experimental religion must be urged upon those who accept the theory of the truth. Ministers must keep their own souls in the love of God, and then impress upon the people the necessity of an individual consecration, a personal conversion. All must obtain a living experience for themselves; they must have Christ enshrined in the heart, his Spirit controlling the affections, or their profession of faith is of no value, and their condition will be even worse than if they had never heard the truth.

Such arrangements should be made for the little companies accepting the truth as shall secure the prosperity of the church. One man may be appointed to lead for a week or a month, then another for a few weeks; and thus different persons may be enlisted in the work, and after a suitable trial, some one should be selected by the voice of the church to be the acknowledged leader, never, however, to be chosen for more than one year. Then another may be selected, or the same one may be re-elected, if his service has proved a blessing to the church. The same principle should be followed in selecting men for other responsible positions, as in the offices of the Conference. Untried men should not be elected as presidents of Conferences. Many fail to exercise proper discernment in these important matters, where eternal interests are involved.

We profess to be the depositaries of God's law; we claim to have greater light and to aim at a higher standard than any other people upon the earth; therefore we should show greater perfection of character and more earnest devotion. A most solemn message has been intrusted to those who have received the light of present truth. Our light should shine forth to brighten the pathway of those who are in darkness. As members of the visible church, and workers in the vineyard of the Lord, all professed Christians should do their utmost to preserve peace, harmony, and love

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in the church. Mark the prayer of Christ: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The unity of the church is the convincing evidence that God has sent Jesus into the world as its Redeemer. This is an argument which worldlings cannot controvert. Therefore Satan is constantly working to prevent this union and harmony, that unbelievers, by witnessing backsliding, dissension, and strife among professed Christians, may become disgusted with religion, and be confirmed in their impenitence. God is dishonored by those who profess the truth while they are at variance and enmity with one another. Satan is the great accuser of the brethren, and all who engage in this work are enlisted in his service.

We profess to have more truth than other denominations; yet if this does not lead to greater consecration, to purer, holier lives, of what benefit is it to us? It would be better for us never to have seen the light of truth, than to profess to accept it, and not be sanctified through it.

In order to determine how important are the interests involved in the conversion of the soul from error to truth, we must appreciate the value of immortality; we must realize how terrible are the pains of the second death; we must comprehend the honor and glory awaiting the ransomed, and understand what it is to live in the presence of Him who died that he might elevate and ennoble man, and give to the overcomer a royal diadem.

The worth of a soul cannot be fully estimated by finite minds. How gratefully will the ransomed and glorified ones remember those who were instrumental in their salvation! No one will then regret his self-denying efforts and persevering labors, his patience, forbearance, and earnest heart-yearnings for souls that might have been lost had he neglected his duty or become weary in well-doing.

Now these white-robed ones are gathered into the fold of the great Shepherd. The faithful worker and

the soul saved through his labor are greeted by the Lamb in the midst of the throne, and are led to the tree of life and to the fountain of living waters. With what joy does the servant of Christ behold these redeemed ones, who are made to share the glory of the Redeemer! How much more precious is heaven to those who have been faithful in the work of saving souls! "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

A LETTER.

DEAR BROTHER O: I have received your letter, and need not express to you the sadness of my heart at the very sudden turn you have recently taken. As I review your past history, I call to mind your experience in Colorado, your reflections while upon that rock where descent seemed impossible, and your subsequent partial recovery to the faith, your temptations through false and ambitious hopes to become greater away from our people than with them, your disappointment, your praiseworthy course of remaining silent, the prayers and sympathies of God's people that were ascending to Heaven in your behalf, and my constant pleadings, "Do not let him alone, but make efforts to save him. He is ensnared; he has lost his hold upon God."

I remember the last time I rode out with your wife before she died. Her burden was for you and her children. She said she trembled for the future because of her children and the skepticism of her husband. "If I should die," she said, "and he should give up the faith, and lead my children to give up the Sabbath, how terrible it would be, after he has received so great light and so many evidences! For this reason I have clung to life. He has not that deep, inwrought work in the soul that will anchor him when temptations come. O Sister White, it is

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for the souls of my husband and children that I have clung to life. And I want to tell you right here that I am heartily sorry that I did not receive in a different spirit the testimony given me and my husband. I see now that the message to us was just what we needed; and had we accepted it, it would have placed us both in a better, far better, position spiritually than we have been in for some time. We were both proud in spirit, and since that time I have felt like shunning you; for I thought you had no faith or confidence in us. But during the last few months this has all disappeared, and I have felt the same confidence, the same close sympathy and love for you that I have had in my past life; but I know my husband does not feel thus, and it is of but little use for me to talk these things over with him. I am too weak to set matters before him as they are in my mind, and he is too firm in his ideas and feelings; but I wanted to tell you that I have implicit faith in the Testimonies and in your work, and have long been wishing for an opportunity to tell you this, and I shall now feel free. Will you forgive me for my feelings and words against you? I have grieved the Spirit of God, and sometimes have felt that he had forsaken me; but I do not now have these feelings, neither have I had them for some time. I never realized the danger of talking unbelief as I have for a few weeks past. I fear greatly for my husband, for he expresses unbelief; and I fear he will give up all, and become an infidel. Oh, how I wish I could help him!"

Bro. O, when you told me that your wife died disbelieving the Testimonies, I did not contradict you, but I thought you did not tell me the truth. I afterward decided that you were greatly in the dark; for I have a letter which she sent me saying that she had the fullest confidence in the Testimonies, and knew them to be true in regard to you and to herself. I attended the camp-meeting in ——, and you were present. You then had an experience that would have proved of lasting value to you if you had remained humble before God as at that time. You then humbled your heart, and upon your knees asked me to forgive you for the things you had said about me and my work. You said, "You have no idea how mean I have talked about you." I assured you I would just as freely forgive you as I hoped Jesus would forgive me my sins and errors. You stated there in the presence of several that you had said many things to my injury; all of which I assured you I freely forgave you, for it was not against me. None of these things were against me; I was only a servant bearing the message God gave me. It was not I personally that you were arrayed against; it was the message that God sent to you through the humble instrument. It was Christ that you injured, not I. "I do not want you," I said, "to confess to me. Make all straight between your soul and God, and all will be right between you and me." Some expressions that were written to you, you had taken in altogether too strong a light. And after reading them carefully again, you said they did not appear to you as they had, and everything was reconciled. You stated after this interview that you felt you had never before known what conversion was, but that you had been born again, converted for the first time. You could say you loved your brethren; your heart was light and happy; you saw the sacredness of the work as you had never seen it before; and your letters expressed the deep change wrought in you by the Spirit of God.

And yet I knew that you would be brought over the ground again, and tested on the very points where you had failed before. Thus the Lord did for the children of Israel; thus he has done with his people in all ages. He will prove them where they have formerly failed; he will try them, and if they fail under the trial the second time, he will bring them around to the same test again.

My heart aches every time I think of you; my soul is sad indeed. Every soul is precious, because it has

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been purchased by the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I sometimes think that we do not place anything like a correct value upon the purchase of the blood of Jesus — the redemption of the soul. When I consider the infinite price paid for the redemption of individual souls, I think, "What if that soul is finally lost? What if he refuses to be a learner in the school of Christ, and fails to practice meekness and lowliness, and will not wear the yoke of Christ?" This, my brother, has been your greatest failure. If you had taken less counsel of yourself, and made Jesus your counselor, you would now be strong in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. You have not yoked up with Christ; you have not been imbued with his Spirit. O, how much you need the divine mold upon your character!

We have much to answer for, considering our superior advantages, and knowing that we must be judged by the light and privileges the Lord has granted us. We cannot plead that we are less favored with light than that people who have been for ages an astonishment and a reproach to the world. We cannot expect judgment to be given in our favor because, like Capernaum, we have been exalted to heaven. The Lord has wrought for his commandment-keeping people. The light that has been reflected to us from heaven was not granted to Sodom and Gomorrah, or they might have remained unto this day; and if the mighty works and knowledge and grace which have been manifested to this people, had been made known to the nations in darkness, we know not how far in advance of this people they might now be. We cannot determine how much more tolerable it would be for them in the day of Judgment than for those who have had the clear light of truth shining upon them as you have had, but through some inexplainable cause have turned from the holy commandment delivered to them. We can only point to your case with sorrow, as a beacon of warning. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." The

Lord seeth not as man seeth. His thoughts and ways are not what blind, selfish men believe they are, or wish them to be. The Lord looks on the heart, and works in and with his creatures to will and to do whatever he commands or requires of them, unless they reject his counsel, and refuse to be obedient to his commandments.

The greater part of your life has been employed in presenting doctrines which, during the last part of your life, you will repudiate and condemn. Which is the genuine work? which is the false? Can we trust to your judgment? can we rely upon your interpretation of the Scriptures? — We cannot. We would be in danger of being misled. You cannot now or at any future period of your life feel that your feet are standing on solid rock. I have been unable to keep from thinking of your future. The truth to me is a living reality. I know it to be truth. The word of God is sure. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Will your light go out in darkness?

I am writing out more fully the volume of "Great Controversy" containing the history of the fall of Satan and the introduction of sin into our world; and I can have a more vivid sense of this great controversy between Christ, the Prince of light, and Satan, the prince of darkness, than I have ever had before. As I see the various devices of Satan to compass the ruin of erring man, and make him like himself, a transgressor of God's holy law, I would that angels of God could come to earth, and present this matter in its great importance. Then I feel so intensely for souls who are willfully departing from light and knowledge and obedience to God's holy law. As Adam and Eve believed the lie of Satan, "Ye shall be as gods," so these souls hope through disobedience to rise to greater hights, to gain some flattering position. I am so anxious, that, while others are sleeping, I spend hours in prayer that God will

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work in mighty power to break the fatal deception upon human minds, and lead them in simplicity to the cross of Calvary. Then I quiet myself with the thought that all these souls are purchased by the blood of the Lord Jesus. We may have love for these souls, but Calvary testifies how God loves them. This work is not ours, but the Lord's. We are only the instruments in his hands to do his will, not our own. We look at those who are doing despite to the Spirit of grace, and tremble for them. We feel sorry, and are disappointed, that they prove untrue to God and the truth; but we feel a deeper sorrow as we think of Jesus, who has purchased them with his own blood. We would give all our possessions to save one, but find we cannot do this. We would give life itself to save one soul unto life eternal; but even this sacrifice would not do the work. The one great sacrifice has been made in the life, the mission, and the death of Jesus Christ. O that minds would contemplate the greatness of that sacrifice! Then might they be better able to comprehend the greatness of salvation.

And now, Bro. O, you who have had so great light, such an abundance of evidence of Bible truth, go not onward and upward with those who will triumph with the truth at last. You now take the side of the first great rebel, to make void the law of God; and he will lead others in the same path of transgression of God's holy law, to ridicule our faith. When the Judgment shall sit, and every one shall be judged out of those things written in the books, how will your case then appear? You will look on this one and that one who would have walked in the way of God's commandments if you had not surrounded them with the atmosphere of unbelief, if you had not perverted the Scriptures by misinterpreting their meaning, and led them away from strict obedience to God's holy law. Can you then look on these countenances with pleasure? You will hear the voice of the great Judge saying, "Who hath required this at your hand?"

Your present wife has had no deep religious experience in self-denial, in self-sacrifice, in communion with God, in belief of the truth. She would easily be led from obedience to God to transgression. Your children will follow where their father leads the way; and unless some special providence shall rescue them, their disobedience and transgression will be laid upon your soul. The Judge of all the earth confronts you with that holy law of whose claims you are not ignorant. Your character and the characters of your wife and of your children are judged by that holy standard of righteousness. You have led them to transgress, and their ruin the holy law of God charges upon you. Through various devices, with which Satan is fully acquainted, you have worked for time and for eternity, trying to make others believe you an honest man in leaving the light of truth. Are you so?—No, no. It is a deception, a terrible deception. What can you answer to God in that day? You will then have a terrible dread and fear of your Creator. You will try to frame some excuse for your course, but everything will seem to evade you. You will stand guilty and condemned. You may feel angry with me because I have thus put the case, but so it is, and so it will be with every transgressor of God's holy law.

Keep ever before you this truth: "Wherever I am, whatever I do, thou, God, seest me." It is not possible for the least item of our conduct to escape the observation of the One who says, "I know thy works." The depths of every heart are open to the inspection of God. Every action, every purpose, every word, is as distinctly marked as though there were only one individual in the whole universe, and all the watchfulness and scrutiny of God were employed on his deportment. Shall we then break even one precept of his law, and teach others to do so, by evasions, by assertions, by falsehoods, in the very sight of the Lawgiver? Shall we brave the sentence in the very face of the Judge? In this there is a

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hardihood which seems to surpass the worst human presumption. I know, my brother, whom I expect to meet in the day of Judgment, that you will have no words of excuse for your late defection.

O that I could present before you, and before others of my brethren, the necessity of an ever-abiding sense of God's presence, which would put such restraint on your life that your moral and religious standing before the people would be far different. We must reach a higher standard. Every soul, in going out and coming in, in all business transactions, at all times and in all places, should act with the consciousness that he is moving under the inspection of God and heavenly angels, and that the Being who will judge every man's work for eternity, accompanies him at every step, observing all his actions and scrutinizing all his motives. A consciousness of the presence of God, and the peril of violating his precepts, would take possession of his entire being. What a change would be seen in man, what a change in society, what evils would be left undone! There would be exclamations from all ranks and among all ages, "I cannot do this great wickedness, and sin against God."

Who shall enter in through the gates into the city? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." You know what these commandments are as well as I do. I love your soul, and the soul of your wife, and the souls of your innocent children; and this is why I now address you. Consider carefully the way your feet are tending. I have more to say, but not now. Will you please to answer me, and return to me the letter containing the dream, as I requested.

Yours with much sorrow and pity and love.

April 20, 1888.

GOD'S LOVE FOR SINNERS.

DEAR BROTHER P: I see by your letter that you are in a state of unbelief, questioning whether there is hope in your case. As Christ's ambassador I would say to you, "Hope thou in God." He "so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Now cannot you take courage from this gracious promise? Satan may tell you many times that you are a sinner; but you can answer, "True, I am a sinner; but 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.'"

Said Jesus, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." And again, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Will you not believe these precious words? Will you not receive them into your heart? "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Is not this promise broad and deep and full? Can you ask more? Will you not allow the Lord right here to erect a standard for you against the enemy? Satan is ready to steal away the blessed assurances of God. He desires to take every glimmer of hope and every ray of light from the soul; but you must not permit him to do this. Exercise faith; fight the good fight of faith; wrestle with these doubts; become acquainted with the promises.

"When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto

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the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right, . . . he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him; he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" When Satan comes in to tempt you to give up all hope, point him to these words. Pray with David, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions; according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord. Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way. The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way."

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Here are the promises, plain and definite, rich and full; but they are all upon conditions. If you comply with the conditions, can you not trust the Lord to fulfill his word? Let these blessed promises, set in the framework of faith, be placed in memory's halls. Not one of them will fail. All that God hath spoken, he will do. "He is faithful that promised."

The work which you have to do on your part, is plainly set before you: "Wash you, make you clean;

put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." The Lord declares: "The children of thy people say, The way of the Lord is not equal." "Hear now, O house of Israel: Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?" "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."

Here the Lord has plainly revealed his will concerning the salvation of the sinner. And the attitude which many assume in expressing doubts and unbelief as to whether the Lord will save them, is a reflection upon the character of God. Those who complain of his severity, are virtually saying, "The way of the Lord is not equal." But he distinctly throws back the imputation upon the sinner: "'Are not your ways unequal?' Can I pardon your transgressions when you do not repent, and turn from your sins?" The character of God is fully vindicated in the words of Scripture I have placed before you. The Lord will receive the sinner when he repents and forsakes his sins so that God can work with his efforts in seeking perfection of character. The promises are not yea and nay, but if man complies with the conditions, they are, in Christ, "yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." The whole

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purpose of God in giving his Son for the sins of the world, is that man may be saved, not in transgression and unrighteousness, but in forsaking sin, washing his robes of character, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. He proposes to remove from man the offensive thing that he hates; but man must co-operate with God in the work. Sin must be given up, hated, and the righteousness of Christ must be accepted by faith. Thus will the divine co-operate with the human.

We should beware that we do not give place to doubt and unbelief, and in our attitude of despair complain of God, and misrepresent him to the world. This is placing ourselves on Satan's side of the question. "Poor souls," he says, "I pity you, mourning under sin; but God has no pity. You long for some ray of hope; but God leaves you to perish, and finds satisfaction in your misery." This is a terrible deception. Do not give ear to the tempter, but say, "Jesus has died that I might live. He loves me, and wills not that I should perish. I have a compassionate heavenly Father; and although I have abused his love, though the blessings he has graciously given me have been squandered, I will arise, and go to my Father, and say, 'I have sinned, and am no longer worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.'" The parable tells you how the wanderer will be received. "*When he was yet a great way off*, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Thus the Bible represents God's willingness to receive the repentant, returning sinner.

But even this parable, tender and touching as it is, comes short of expressing the infinite compassion of the heavenly Father. The Lord declares by the prophet, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore *with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.*" While the sinner is yet far from his Father's house, wasting his substance in a strange country, the Father's heart is yearning over him; and every longing awakened in the soul to return to God is but the tender pleading of his Spirit, wooing, entreating, drawing the wanderer to his Father's heart of love.

With the rich promises of the Bible before you, can you still give place to doubt? Can you believe that when the poor sinner longs to return, longs to forsake his sins, the Lord sternly withholds him from coming to his feet in repentance? Away with such thoughts! Nothing can be more dishonoring to God than these ideas. Nothing can hurt your own soul more than to entertain such thoughts of our heavenly Father. Our whole spiritual life will catch a tone of hopelessness from such conceptions of God. They discourage all effort to seek God or to serve him. We must not think of God only as a judge ready to pronounce sentence against us. He hates sin; but from love to sinners he gave himself, in the person of Christ, that all who would, might be saved, and have eternal blessedness in the kingdom of glory.

The Lord himself declares his character, that Satan has malignantly set in a false light. He has revealed himself as, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." What stronger or more tender language could have been employed than he has chosen, in which to express his love toward us? He declares, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee."

In the plan of redemption, "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The all-wise, all-powerful God, he who dwells in light unapproachable, is full of love, of goodness. Therefore give glory to God, ye that are doubting and trembling; for Jesus lives to make intercession for us. Give God the glory for the gift of his dear Son, and that he has not died for us in vain.

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Brother P, you ask if you have committed the sin which has no forgiveness in this life or in the life to come. I answer, I do not see the slightest evidence that this is the case. What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? — It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan. It is through the medium of his Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men willfully reject the Spirit, and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which had been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness. Thus the words of Christ are verified, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" For a time, persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character, and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy's ground, standing under his black banner.

My brother, the Spirit invites you to-day. Come with your whole heart to Jesus. Repent of your sins, make confession to God, forsake all iniquity, and you may appropriate to yourself all his promises. "Look unto me, and be ye saved," is his gracious invitation.

The day will come when the awful denunciation of God's wrath will be uttered against all who have persisted in their disloyalty to him. This will be when God must speak and do terrible things in righteousness against the transgressors of his law. But you need not be among those who will come under the wrath of God. It is now the day of his salvation. The light from the cross of Calvary is now shining forth in clear, bright rays, revealing Jesus, our sacrifice for sin. As you read the promises which I have set before you, remember they are the expression of unutterable love and pity. The great heart of infinite Love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Yes, only believe that God is your helper. He wants to restore his moral image in man. As you draw nigh to him with confession and repentance, he will draw nigh to you with mercy and forgiveness. We owe the Lord everything. He is the author of our salvation. As you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

ACCEPTABLE CONFESSION.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing, in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances, to commend our souls to the God of heaven, or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy. This is a precious promise, given to fallen man to encourage him to trust in the God of love, and to seek for eternal life in his kingdom.

We read that Daniel, the prophet of God, was a man "greatly beloved" of Heaven. He held a high

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position in the courts of Babylon, and served and honored God alike in prosperity and trial; and yet he humbled himself, and confessed his sin and the sin of his people. With deep sorrow of heart he acknowledged: "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee."

Daniel did not seek to excuse himself or his people before God; but in humility and contrition of soul he confessed the full extent and demerit of their transgressions, and vindicated God's dealings as just toward a nation that had set at naught his requirements and would not profit by his entreaties.

There is great need to-day of just such sincere, heart-felt repentance and confession. Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced that repentance which is not to be repented of, and have not confessed our sin with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit, abhorring our iniquity, we have never sought truly for the forgiveness of sin; and if we have never sought, we have never found the peace of God. The only reason why we may not have remission of sins that are past, is that we are not willing to humble our proud hearts, and comply with the conditions of the word of truth. There is explicit instruction given concerning this matter. Confession of sin, whether public or private, should be heart-felt, and freely expressed. It

is not to be urged from the sinner. It is not to be made in a flippant and careless way, or forced from those who have no realizing sense of the abhorrent character of sin. The confession that is mingled with tears and sorrow, that is the outpouring of the inmost soul, finds its way to the God of infinite pity. Says the psalmist, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

There are too many confessions like that of Pharaoh when he was suffering the judgments of God. He acknowledged his sin in order to escape further punishment, but returned to his defiance of Heaven as soon as the plagues were stayed. Balaam's confession was of a similar character. Terrified by the angel standing in his pathway with drawn sword, he acknowledged his guilt, lest he should lose his life. There was no genuine repentance for sin, no contrition, no conversion of purpose, no abhorrence of evil, and no worth or virtue in his confession. Judas Iscariot, after betraying his Lord, returned to the priests, exclaiming, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." But his confession was not of such a character as would commend him to the mercy of God. It was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation, and a fearful looking for of judgment. The consequences that were to result to him, drew forth this acknowledgment of his great sin. There was no deep, heart-breaking grief in his soul that he had delivered the Son of God to be mocked, scourged, and crucified; that he had betrayed the Holy One of Israel into the hands of wicked and unscrupulous men. His confession was only prompted by a selfish and darkened heart.

After Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was, how to excuse their sin before God, and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord inquired con-

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cerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God and partly upon his companion: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The woman put the blame upon the serpent, saying, "'The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.' Why did you make the serpent? Why did you suffer him to come into Eden?" These were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies, and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit, and will not be acceptable before God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt himself, and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. Like the poor publican, not lifting up so much as his eyes unto heaven, he will smite upon his breast, and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and those who do acknowledge their guilt will be justified; for Jesus will plead his blood in behalf of the repentant soul.

It is no degradation for man to bow down before his Maker and confess his sins, and plead for forgiveness through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. It is noble to acknowledge your wrong before Him whom you have wounded by transgression and rebellion. It lifts you up before men and angels; for "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." But he who kneels before fallen man, and opens in confession the secret thoughts and imaginations of his heart, is dishonoring himself by debasing his manhood, and degrading every noble instinct of his soul. In unfolding the sins of his life to a priest corrupted with wine and licentiousness, his standard of character is lowered, and he is defiled in consequence. God is degraded in his thought to the likeness of sinful humanity; for the priest stands as a representative of God. It is this degrading confession of man to fallen man, that accounts for much of the increasing evil which is defiling the world, and fitting it for final destruction.

Says the apostle: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." This scripture has been interpreted to sustain the practice of going to the priest for absolution; but it has no such application. Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offense to your friend or neighbor, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty freely to forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother whom you wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer. The case is not brought before the priest at all, but before the only true mediator, our great High Priest, who "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," and who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and is able to cleanse from every stain of iniquity.

When David sinned against Uriah and his wife, he pleaded before God for forgiveness. He declares: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." All wrong done to others reaches back from the injured one to God. Therefore David seeks for pardon, not from a priest, but from the Creator of man. He prays: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as only to be brought before God; they may be wrongs that should be confessed before individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a general kind that should be made known in the congregation of the people. But all confession should be definite, and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you are guilty.

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When Israel was oppressed by the Ammonites, the chosen people made a plea before God that illustrates the definite character of true confession: "And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim. And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? . . . Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods; wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation. And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned; do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day." Then they began to act in harmony with their confessions and prayers. "They put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord." And the Lord's great heart of love was grieved, — "*was grieved* for the misery of Israel."

Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. Says Paul, speaking of the work of repentance: "Ye sorrowed after a godly sort; what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

In the days of Samuel, the Israelites wandered from God. They were suffering the consequences of sin, for they had lost their faith in God, lost their discernment of his power and wisdom to rule the nation, lost their confidence in his ability to defend and vindicate his cause. They turned from the great Ruler of the universe, and desired to be governed as were the nations around them. Before

they found peace they made this definite confession: "We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." The very sin of which they were convicted, had to be confessed. Their ingratitude oppressed their souls, and severed them from God.

When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrong-doer does not discern the defects of his character, nor realize the enormity of the evil he has committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt, he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances, he would not have done this or that, for which he is reproved. But the examples in God's word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin, or attempt at self-justification.

Paul did not seek to shield himself; he paints his sin in its darkest hue, not attempting to lessen his guilt. He says: "Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." He does not hesitate to declare that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God, and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

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ERRONEOUS IDEAS OF CONFESSION.

DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN ——: I have heard of the good work that has been going on among you, and it rejoices my heart. Since coming to Battle Creek, my mind has been much exercised in regard to the church here. During the week of prayer the Lord wrought for us, and in all our institutions there has continued to be a steady, well-balanced interest.

Meetings have been held in the College, with marked success. There have been several conversions among the students from the world. These conversions were the more striking because the individuals had had no religious experience before coming to the College, and some of them were determined not to put themselves in the channel of light by attending the meetings. But they did attend, were convicted by the Spirit of the Lord, and were soundly converted. They say they were never so happy in their lives as now. Several have gone home to spend the holidays. Their parents are not professors of religion, and their faith will be severely tested. But good letters come back, stating that they are taking up their new responsibilities, and trying to show to their friends that the new faith they have received has not made them fanatics or extremists, but well-balanced Christians, better in every way than before their conversion; that they possess the principles of pure faith and love to God and their neighbor, and manifest them by a well-ordered life and a godly conversation. This good work in the College has been a source of great rejoicing to us all.

We have had morning meetings for the helpers at the Sanitarium for three weeks, at half past five. I have spoken on these occasions with good results; I have also spoken to the patients several times.

We have had meetings with the workers in the *Review* Office at noon. Here the Lord is manifestly at work. Men who have professed the truth for years,

and yet have never seemed to have any warmth of soul, have been visited by the Spirit of the Lord, and you should hear their heart-felt testimonies bearing witness to the precious love of God in their souls. Some of them say they were never converted before.

Meetings have been held at the Tabernacle twice each day for two weeks, and the message presented has taken hold of hearts. The testimonies borne have the right ring. I am thankful to the Lord for this good work. We have also had some special meetings at the Tabernacle. This church being large, after we had called the people forward for prayers Sabbath afternoon, the last Sabbath of the old year, we invited those who felt that they must make confession, to go into one of the vestries, and here a special opportunity was given them. I had spoken upon the last chapter of Malachi, "Will a man rob God?" "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Many confessions were made upon this point.

Some had not dealt honestly with their neighbors, and they confessed these sins, and have since made restitution. During the following week, some of those who had not been dealing justly with God, and consequently had been separating themselves from him, began to restore that which they had withheld. One brother had not paid tithes for two years. He gave his note to the Secretary of the Conference for the tithe he had withheld and the interest on it, amounting to $571.50. I thank the Lord that he had the courage to do this. Another gave his note for $300.00. Another man who had backslidden from God so far that but little hope was cherished that he would ever turn his feet into the path of righteousness again, gave his note for $1000. It was proposed that these long-withheld tithes and offerings be devoted to the Central European Mission; so with these and the Christ-

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mas donations, nearly $6000 has come into the treasury from this church to be applied to the missionary cause.

The soul that lives by faith on Christ desires no other nor greater good than to know and to do the will of God. It is God's will that faith in Christ shall be made perfect by works; he connects the salvation and eternal life of those who believe, with these works, and through them provides for the light of truth to go to all countries and peoples. This is the fruit of the working of God's Spirit.

The truth has taken hold of hearts. It is not a fitful impulse, but a true turning unto the Lord, and the perverse will of men is brought into subjection to the will of God. To rob God in tithes and offerings is a violation of the plain injunction of Jehovah, and works the deepest injury to those who do it; for it deprives them of the blessing of God, which is promised to those who deal honestly with him.

We have found in our experience that if Satan cannot keep souls bound in the ice of indifference, he will try to push them into the fire of fanaticism. When the Spirit of the Lord comes among his people, the enemy seizes the opportunity to work also, seeking to mold the work of God through the peculiar, unsanctified traits of different ones who are connected with that work. Thus there is always danger that unwise moves will be made. Many carry on a work of their own devising, a work which God has not prompted.

But as far as the work has gone here in Battle Creek, there has been no fanaticism. We have felt the need of guarding it on every hand with the greatest care; for if the enemy can push individuals to extremes, he is well pleased. He can thus do greater harm than if there had been no religious awakening. We know that there has never yet been a religious effort made in which Satan has not tried his best to intrude himself, and in these last days he will do this as never before. He sees that his time is short, and he will

work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness to mingle errors and incorrect views with the work of God, and push men into false positions.

In many of our religious awakenings, mistakes have been made in regard to confession. While confession is good for the soul, there is need of moving wisely.

I have been shown that many, many confessions should never be spoken in the hearing of mortals; for the result is that which the limited judgment of finite beings does not anticipate. Seeds of evil are scattered in the minds and hearts of those who hear, and when they are under temptation, these seeds will spring up and bear fruit, and the same sad experience will be repeated. For, think the tempted ones, these sins cannot be so very grievous; for did not those who have made confession, Christians of long standing, do these very things? Thus the open confession in the church of these secret sins will prove a savor of death rather than of life.

There should be no reckless, wholesale movements in this matter, for the cause of God may be made disreputable in the eyes of unbelievers. If they hear confessions of base conduct made by those who profess to be followers of Christ, a reproach is brought upon his cause. If Satan could by any means spread the impression that Seventh-day Adventists are the offscouring of all things, he would be glad to do it. God forbid that he should have occasion! God will be better glorified if we confess the secret, inbred corruption of the heart to Jesus alone, than if we open its recesses to finite, erring man, who cannot judge righteously unless his heart is constantly imbued with the Spirit of God. God knows the heart, even every secret of the soul; then do not pour into human ears the story which God alone should hear.

There are confessions of a nature that should be brought before a select few, and acknowledged by the sinner in deepest humility. The matter must not be conducted in such a way that vice shall be construed

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into virtue, and the sinner made proud of his evil doings. If there are things of a disgraceful nature that should come before the church, let them be brought before a few proper persons selected to hear them, and do not put the cause of Christ to open shame by publishing abroad the hypocrisy that has existed in the church. It would cast reflections upon those who had tried to be Christlike in character. These things should be considered.

Then there are confessions that the Lord has bidden us make to one another. If you have wronged your brother by word or deed, you are first to be reconciled to him before your worship will be acceptable to Heaven. Confess to those whom you have injured, and make restitution, bringing forth fruit meet for repentance. If any one has feelings of bitterness, wrath, or malice toward a brother, let him go to him personally, confess his sin, and seek forgiveness.

From Christ's manner of dealing with the erring we may learn profitable lessons which are equally applicable to this work of confession. He bids us go to the one who has fallen into temptation, and labor with him alone. If it is not possible to help him, because of the darkness of his mind and his separation from God, we are to try again with two or three others. If the wrong is not righted, then, and only then, we are to tell it to the church. It is far better if wrongs can be righted, and injuries healed, without bringing the matter before the whole church. The church is not to be made the receptacle for the outpouring of every complaint or confession.

I recognize, on the other hand, the danger of yielding to the temptation to conceal sin or to compromise with it, and thus act the hypocrite. Be sure that the confession fully covers the influence of the wrong committed, that no duty to God, to your neighbor, or to the church is left undone, and then you may lay hold upon Christ with confidence, expecting his blessing. But the question of how and to whom sins

should be confessed, is one that demands careful, prayerful study. We must consider it from all points, weighing it before God, and seeking divine illumination. We should inquire whether to confess publicly the sins of which we have been guilty will do good or harm. Will it show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light? Will it help to purify the minds of the people, or will the open relation of the deceptions practiced in denying the truth, have an after-influence to contaminate other minds, and destroy confidence in us?

Men have not the wisdom from God, and the constant enlightenment from the Source of all power, that would make it safe for them to follow impulses or impressions. In my experience I have seen this done to the destruction, not only of those who acted upon this principle, but of many others who came under their influence. The wildest extravagance was the result of this impulsive work. A declension in faith followed, and unbelief and skepticism became strong in proportion to the extreme in religious excitement. The work that is not wrought in God comes to naught as soon as the excitement is over.

There is power and permanency in what the Lord does, whether he works by human instrumentality or otherwise. The progress and perfection of the work of grace in the heart are not dependent upon excitement or extravagant demonstration. Hearts that are under the influence of the Spirit of God will be in sweet harmony with his will. I have been shown that when the Lord works by his Holy Spirit, there will be nothing in its operations which will degrade the Lord's people before the world, but it will exalt them. The religion of Christ does not make those who profess it coarse and rough. The subjects of grace are not unteachable, but ever willing to learn of Jesus and to counsel with one another.

What we learn of the Great Teacher of truth, will be enduring; it will not savor of self-sufficiency, but will lead to humility and meekness; and the work that

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we do will be wholesome, pure, and ennobling, because wrought in God. Those who thus work will show in their home life, and in their association with men, that they have the mind of Christ. Grace and truth will reign in their hearts, inspiring and purifying their motives, and controlling their outward actions.

I hope that none will obtain the idea that they are earning the favor of God by confession of sins, or that there is special virtue in confessing to human beings. There must be in the experience, that faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. The love of Christ will subdue the carnal propensities. The truth not only bears within itself the evidence of its heavenly origin, but proves that by the grace of God's Spirit it is effectual in the purification of the soul. The Lord would have us come to him daily with all our troubles and confessions of sin, and he can give us rest in wearing his yoke and bearing his burden. His Holy Spirit, with its gracious influences, will fill the soul, and every thought will be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ.

Now I am fearful that by some error on your part, the blessing of God which has come to you in—— will be turned into a curse; that some false idea will obtain, so that you will be in a worse condition in a few months than you were before this work of revival. If you do not keep your souls guarded, you will appear in the worst possible light to unbelievers. God would not be glorified with this fitful kind of service. Be careful not to carry matters to extremes, and bring lasting reproach upon the precious cause of God. The failure that many make is that after they have been blessed of God they do not, in the humility of Christ, seek to be a blessing to others. Now that the words of eternal life have been sown in your hearts, I entreat you to walk humbly with God, do the works of Christ, and bring forth much fruit unto righteousness. I do hope and pray that you will act like sons and daughters of the Most High, and not become extremists, or do anything that shall grieve the Spirit of God.

Do not look to men, nor hang your hopes upon them, feeling that they are infallible, but look to Jesus constantly. Say nothing that would cast a reproach upon our faith. Confess your secret sins alone before your God. Acknowledge your heart wanderings to him who knows perfectly how to treat your case. If you have wronged your neighbor, acknowledge to him your sin, and show fruit of the same by making restitution. Then claim the blessing. Come to God just as you are, and let him heal all your infirmities. Press your case to the throne of grace; let the work be thorough. Be sincere in dealing with God and your own soul. If you come to him with a heart truly contrite, he will give you the victory. Then you may bear a sweet testimony of freedom, showing forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. He will not misapprehend or misjudge you. Your fellow-men cannot absolve you from sin, or cleanse you from iniquity. Jesus is the only one who can give you peace. He loved you, and gave himself for you. His great heart of love is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." What sins are too great for him to pardon? what soul too dark and sin-oppressed for him to save? He is gracious, not looking for merit in us, but of his own boundless goodness healing our backslidings and loving us freely, while we are yet sinners. He is "slow to anger, and of great kindness;" "long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Do not seek to get wound up to a high pitch of excitement; but go to work for others, and patiently instruct them. You will be inclined now to conjecture that every one has a load of evil to confess, and you will be in danger of making this the point of attack. You will want to bring every one over the same ground that you have been over, and you will feel that nothing can be done until all have gone through with the same work of confession. You will not be disposed to take up the labor of helping others

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with the Spirit of God resting upon you, your own hearts softened and subdued by the deep-wrought work of cleansing. You will be in great danger of marring the work of God by exercising your own spirit. If you work for souls with humble, trustful dependence upon God, if the radiance of his Spirit is reflected from you in a Christlike character, if sympathy, kindness, forbearance, and love are abiding principles in your life, you will be a blessing to all around you. You will not criticise others, or manifest a harsh, denunciatory spirit toward them; you will not feel that their ideas must be made to meet your standard; but the love of Jesus and the peaceable fruits of righteousness will be revealed in you.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. . . . And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

The enemy will seek to intrude himself, even amid your religious exercises. Every avenue will need to be faithfully guarded, lest selfishness and pride become interwoven with your work. If self has really been crucified, with the affections and lusts, the fruit will appear in good works to the glory of God. I entreat you, in the fear of God, not to let your works degenerate. Be consistent, symmetrical Christians. When the heart has given its affections to Christ, old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

Our religion must be intelligent. The wisdom from above must strengthen, stablish, and settle us. We must go on and on, forward and upward, from light to still greater light, and God will still reveal his glory to us as he doth not unto the world.

Battle Creek, Mich., Jan. 6, 1889.

GOD'S PRESENCE A REALITY.

DEAR BROTHER Q: I am glad you are to-day in ——, and if you make good your trust, you will be the right man in the right place. Keep self out of sight; let it not come in, to mar the work, though this will be natural. Walk humbly with God. Let us work for the Master with disinterested energy, keeping before us a sense of the constant presence of God. Think of Moses, — what endurance and patience characterized his life. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, says, "For he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." The character that Paul thus ascribes to Moses does not mean simply passive resistance of evil, but perseverance in the right. He kept the Lord ever before him, and the Lord was ever at his right hand to help him.

Moses had a deep sense of the personal presence of God. He was not only looking down through the ages for Christ to be made manifest in the flesh, but he saw Christ in a special manner accompanying the children of Israel in all their travels. God was real to him, ever present in his thoughts. When misunderstood, when called upon to face danger and to bear insult for Christ's sake, he endured without retaliation. Moses believed in God as one whom he needed, and who would help him because of his need. God was to him a present help.

Much of the faith which we see is merely nominal; the real, trusting, persevering faith is rare. Moses realized in his own experience the promise that God will be a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. He had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Here is another point in regard to faith which we wish to study: God will reward the man of faith and obedience. If this faith is brought into the life experience, it will enable every one who fears and loves God to endure trials. Moses was full of confidence in God, because he had appropriating faith. He

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needed help, and he prayed for it, grasped it by faith, and wove into his experience the belief that God cared for him. He believed that God ruled his life in particular. He saw and acknowledged God in every detail of his life, and felt that he was under the eye of the All-seeing One, who weighs motives, who tries the heart. He looked to God, and trusted in him for strength to carry him uncorrupted through every form of temptation. He knew that a special work had been assigned to him, and he desired, as far as possible, to make that work thoroughly successful. But he knew that he could not do this without divine aid; for he had a perverse people to deal with. The presence of God was sufficient to carry him through the most trying situations in which a man could be placed.

Moses did not merely think of God; he saw him. God was the constant vision before him; he never lost sight of his face. He saw Jesus as his Saviour, and he believed that the Saviour's merits would be imputed to him. This faith was to Moses no guess-work; it was a reality. This is the kind of faith we need,—faith that will endure the test. O, how often we yield to temptation, because we do not keep our eye upon Jesus! Our faith is not continuous, because, through self-indulgence, we sin, and then we cannot endure, as "seeing Him who is invisible."

My brother, make Christ your daily, hourly companion, and you will not complain that you have no faith. Contemplate Christ. View his character. Talk of him. The less you exalt self, the more you will see in Jesus to exalt. God has a work for you to do. Keep the Lord ever before you. Bro. and Sister Q, reach up higher and still higher for clearer views of the character of Christ. When Moses prayed, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," the Lord did not rebuke him, but he granted his prayer. God declared to his servant, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee." We keep apart from God, and this is why we do not see the revealings of his power.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM.

My brother, my sister, may the Lord impart wisdom to you both, that you may know how to deal with minds. May the Lord teach you how great things he can do, if you will only believe. Carry Jesus with you, as your companion, into the school-room. Keep him before you when you speak, that the law of kindness may proceed from your lips. Do not permit any one to mold you in this matter. Allow the children under your care to have an individuality, as well as yourselves. Ever try to lead them, but never drive them.

I see some things here in Switzerland that I think are worthy of imitation. The teachers of the schools often go out with their pupils while they are at play, and teach them how to amuse themselves, and are at hand to repress any disorder or wrong. Sometimes they take their scholars out, and have a long walk with them. I like this; I think there is less opportunity for the children to yield to temptation. The teachers seem to enter into the sports of the children, and to regulate them. I cannot in any way sanction the idea that children must feel that they are under a constant distrust, and cannot act as children. But let the teachers join in the amusements of the children, be one with them, and show that they want them to be happy, and it will give the children confidence. They may be controlled by love, but not by following them at their meals and in their amusements with a stern, unbending severity.

Let me say here that those who have never had children of their own are not usually the best qualified to manage wisely the varied minds of children and youth. They are apt to make one law, from which there can be no appeal. Teachers must remember that they themselves were once children.

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They should adapt their teaching to the minds of the children, placing themselves in sympathy with them; then the children can be instructed and benefited both by precept and example.

May the Spirit of Jesus come in to mold your hearts, to fashion your characters, to elevate and ennoble your souls! Christ said to his disciples, "Unless ye humble yourselves, and become as this little child, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." There is need of laying aside these cast-iron rules, of coming down from these stilts, to the humbleness of the child. O that some of the spirit of severity may change to a spirit of love, that happiness and sunshine may take the place of discouragement and grief!

THE NATURE AND INFLUENCE OF THE TESTIMONIES.

As the end draws near, and the work of giving the last warning to the world extends, it becomes more important for those who accept present truth to have a clear understanding of the nature and influence of the Testimonies, which God in his providence has linked with the work of the third angel's message from its very rise. In the following pages are given extracts from what I have written during the last forty years, relating to my own early experience in this special work, and also presenting what God has shown me concerning the nature and importance of the Testimonies, the manner in which they are given, and how they should be regarded.

"It was not long after the passing of the time in 1844, that my first vision was given me. I was visiting a dear sister in Christ, whose heart was knit with mine. Five of us, all women, were kneeling quietly at the family altar. While we were praying, the power of God came upon me as I had never felt it

before. I seemed to be surrounded with light, and to be rising higher and higher from the earth."[1] At this time I had a view of the experience of the advent believers, the coming of Christ, and the reward to be given to the faithful.

"In a second vision, which soon followed the first, I was shown the trials through which I must pass, and that it was my duty to go and relate to others what God had revealed to me. It was shown me that my labors would meet with great opposition, and that my heart would be rent with anguish, but that the grace of God would be sufficient to sustain me through all. The teaching of this vision troubled me exceedingly; for it pointed out my duty to go out among the people and present the truth."

"One great fear that oppressed me was that if I obeyed the call of duty, and went out declaring myself to be one favored of the Most High with visions and revelations for the people, I might yield to sinful exaltation, and be lifted above the station that was right for me to occupy, bring upon myself the displeasure of God, and lose my own soul. I had before me several cases such as I have here described, and my heart shrunk from the trying ordeal.

"I now entreated that if I must go and relate what the Lord had shown me, I should be preserved from undue exaltation. Said the angel, 'Your prayers are heard, and shall be answered. If this evil that you dread threatens you, the hand of God will be stretched out to save you; by affliction he will draw you to himself, and preserve your humility. Deliver the message faithfully. Endure unto the end, and you shall eat the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of life.'"[2]

At this time there was fanaticism among some of those who had been believers in the first message. Serious errors in doctrine and practice were cherished, and some were ready to condemn all who would not accept their views. God revealed these

[1] Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, p. 58. [2] Vol. 1, pp. 62, 64, 65.

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errors to me in vision, and sent me to his erring children to declare them; but in performing this duty I met with bitter opposition and reproach.

"It was a great cross for me to relate to the erring what had been shown me concerning them. It caused me great distress to see others troubled or grieved. And when obliged to declare the messages, I would often soften them down, and make them appear as favorable for the individual as I could, and then would go by myself, and weep in agony of spirit. I looked upon those who had only their own souls to care for, and thought that if I were in their condition I would not murmur. It was hard to relate the plain, cutting testimonies given me of God. I anxiously watched the result, and if the persons reproved rose up against the reproof, and afterward opposed the truth, these queries would arise in my mind: Did I deliver the message just as I should? Could there not have been some way to save them? And then such distress pressed upon my soul that I often felt that death would be a welcome messenger, and the grave a sweet resting-place.

"I did not realize the danger and sin of such a course, until in vision I was taken into the presence of Jesus. He looked upon me with a frown, and turned his face from me. It is not possible to describe the terror and agony I then felt. I fell upon my face before him, but had no power to utter a word. Oh, how I longed to be covered and hid from that dreadful frown! Then could I realize, in some degree, what the feelings of the lost will be when they cry, 'Mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!'

"Presently an angel bade me rise, and the sight that met my eyes can hardly be described. Before me was a company whose hair and garments were torn, and whose countenances were the very picture of despair and horror. They came close to me, and rubbed their garments upon mine. As I looked at my garments, I saw that they were stained with blood. Again I fell like one dead, at the feet of my accompanying angel. I could not plead one excuse, and longed to be away from that holy place. The angel raised me to my feet, and said, 'This is not your case now, but this scene has passed before you to let you know what your situation must be if you neglect to declare to others what the Lord has revealed to you.'"[1] With this solemn warning before me, I went out to speak to the people the words of reproof and instruction given me of God.

PERSONAL TESTIMONIES.

The messages given me for different individuals I often wrote out for them, in many cases doing this at their urgent request. As my work extended, this became an important and taxing part of my labors. Before the publication of Testimony 15, many requests for written testimonies were sent me by those whom I had counseled or reproved; but I was in a state of great exhaustion, from wearing labor, and I shrank from the task, especially since I knew that many of these persons were very unworthy, and there seemed little hope that the warnings given would work any decided change in them. At that time I was greatly encouraged by the following dream: —

"A person brought to me a web of white cloth, and bade me cut it into garments for persons of all sizes, and all descriptions of character, and circumstances in life. I was told to cut them out, and hang them up all ready to be made when called for. I had the impression that many for whom I was required to cut garments were unworthy. I inquired if that was the last piece of cloth I should have to cut, and was told that it was not; that as soon as I had finished this one, there were others for me to take hold of. I felt discouraged at the amount of work before me, and stated that I had been engaged in cutting garments for others for more than twenty years,

[1] Vol. 1, pp. 73, 74.

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and my labors had not been appreciated, neither did I see that my work had accomplished much good. I spoke to the person who brought the cloth to me, of one woman in particular, for whom he had told me to cut a garment. I stated that she would not prize the garment, and that it would be a loss of time and material to present it to her. She was very poor, of inferior intellect, and untidy in her habits, and would soon soil it.

"The person replied, 'Cut out the garments. That is your duty. The loss is not yours, but mine. God sees not as man sees. He lays out the work that he would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that.' . . .

"I then held up my hands, calloused as they were with long use of the shears, and stated that I could not but shrink at the thought of pursuing this kind of labor. The person again repeated, —

"'Cut out the garments. Your release has not yet come.'

"With feelings of great weariness I arose to engage in the work. Before me lay new, polished shears, which I commenced using. At once my feelings of weariness and discouragement left me, the shears seemed to cut with hardly an effort on my part, and I cut out garment after garment with comparative ease."[1]

There are many dreams arising from the common things of life, with which the Spirit of God has nothing to do. "There are also false dreams, as well as false visions, which are inspired by the spirit of Satan. But dreams from the Lord are classed in the word of God with visions, and are as truly the fruits of the Spirit of prophecy as visions. Such dreams, taking into the account the persons who have them, and the circumstances under which they are given, contain their own proofs of their genuineness."[2]

Since the warning and instruction given in testimony for individual cases applied with equal force to many others who had not been specially pointed out

[1] Vol. 2, pp. 10–12. (First published in 1868.) [2] Vol. 1, p. 569. (1867.)

in this manner, it seemed to be my duty to publish the personal testimonies for the benefit of the church. In Testimony 15, speaking of the necessity for doing this, I said: "I know of no better way to present my views of general dangers and errors, and the duty of all who love God and keep his commandments, than by giving these testimonies. Perhaps there is no more direct and forcible way of presenting what the Lord has shown me."[1]

In a vision given me June 12, 1868, I was shown that which fully justified my course in publishing personal testimonies: "When the Lord singles out individual cases, and specifies their wrongs, others, who have not been shown in vision, frequently take it for granted that they are right, or nearly so. If one is reproved for a special wrong, brethren and sisters should carefully examine themselves to see wherein they have failed, and wherein they have been guilty of the same sin. They should possess the spirit of humble confession. If others think them right, it does not make them so. God looks at the heart. He is proving and testing souls in this manner. In rebuking the wrongs of one, he designs to correct many. But if they fail to take the reproof to themselves, and flatter themselves that God passes over their errors because he does not especially single them out, they deceive their own souls, and will be shut up in darkness, and be left to their own ways, to follow the imagination of their own hearts.

"Many are dealing falsely with their own souls, and are in a great deception in regard to their true condition before God. He employs ways and means to best serve his purpose, and to prove what is in the hearts of his professed followers. He makes plain the wrongs of some, that others may thus be warned, and fear, and shun those errors. By self-examination they may find that they are doing the same things which God condemns in others. If they really desire to serve God, and fear to offend him, they will not wait for their sins to be specified before they

[1] Vol. 2, p. 9. (1868.)

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make confession and with humble repentance return unto the Lord. They will forsake the things which have displeased God, according to the light given to others. If, on the contrary, those who are not right see that they are guilty of the very sins that have been reproved in others, yet continue in the same unconsecrated course because they have not been specially named, they endanger their own souls, and will be led captive by Satan at his will."[1]

"I was shown that in the wisdom of God the sins and errors of all would not be revealed. . . . All who are guilty are addressed in these individual testimonies, although their names may not be attached to the special testimony borne; and if individuals pass over and cover up their own sins because their names are not especially called, they will not be prospered of God. They cannot advance in the divine life, but will become darker and darker, until the light of heaven will be entirely withdrawn."[2]

In a view given me about twenty years ago, "I was directed to bring out general principles, in speaking and in writing, and at the same time to specify the dangers, errors, and sins of some individuals, that all might be warned, reproved, and counseled. I saw that all should search their own hearts and lives closely, to see if they had not made the same mistakes for which others were corrected, and if the warnings given for others did not apply to their own cases. If so, they should feel that the counsel and reproofs were given especially for them, and should make as practical an application of them as though they were especially addressed to themselves. . . . God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to develop what is in their hearts."[3]

[1] Vol. 2, pp. 112, 113. (1868.) [2] Vol. 2, p. 447 (1870.)
[3] Vol. 2, p. 687. (1871.)

OBJECT OF THE TESTIMONIES.

"In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days he speaks to them by the Testimonies of his Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed his people more earnestly than he instructs them now concerning his will, and the course that he would have them pursue."[1]

"The Lord has seen fit to give me a view of the needs and errors of his people. Painful though it has been to me, I have faithfully set before the offenders their faults and the means of remedying them. . . . Thus has the Spirit of God pronounced warnings and judgments, withholding not, however, the sweet promise of mercy. . . .

"Repentant sinners have no cause to despair because they are reminded of their transgressions and warned of their danger. These very efforts in their behalf show how much God loves them and desires to save them. They have only to follow his counsel and do his will, to inherit eternal life. God sets the sins of his erring people before them, that they may behold them in all their enormity under the light of divine truth. It is then their duty to renounce them forever." "If God's people would recognize his dealings with them, and accept his teachings, they would find a straight path for their feet, and a light to guide them through darkness and discouragement."[2]

"Warnings and reproofs are not given to the erring among Seventh-day Adventists because their lives are more blameworthy than are the lives of professed Christians of the nominal churches, nor because their example or their acts are worse than those of the Adventists who will not yield obedience to the claims of God's law; but because they have great light, and have by their profession taken their position as God's special, chosen people, having his law

[1] Vol. 4, p. 148. (1876.) [2] Vol. 4, pp. 14, 15. (1876.)

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written in their hearts. They signify their loyalty to the God of heaven by yielding obedience to the laws of his government. They are God's representatives upon the earth. Any sin in them separates them from God, and, in a special manner, dishonors his name, by giving the enemies of his holy law occasion to reproach his cause and his people, whom he has called 'a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,' that they should show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. . . .

"The Lord reproves and corrects the people who profess to keep his law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity, because he wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in his fear. . . . God rebukes, reproves, and corrects them, that they may be refined, sanctified, elevated, and finally exalted to his own throne."[1]

"I have been looking over the Testimonies given for Sabbath-keepers, and I am astonished at the mercy of God and his care for his people in giving them so many warnings, pointing out their dangers, and presenting before them the exalted position which he would have them occupy. If they would keep themselves in his love, and separate from the world, he would cause his special blessings to rest upon them, and his light to shine round about them. Their influence for good might be felt in every branch of the work, and in every part of the gospel field. But if they fail to meet the mind of God, if they continue to have so little sense of the exalted character of the work as they have had in the past, their influence and example will prove a terrible curse. They will do harm, and only harm. The blood of precious souls will be found upon their garments.

"Testimonies of warning have been repeated. I inquire, Who have heeded them? Who have been zealous in repenting of their sins and idolatry, and have been earnestly pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? . . . I have waited anxiously, hoping that God would put his Spirit upon some, and use them as instruments of righteousness to awaken and set in order his church. I have almost despaired as I have seen, year after year, a greater departure from that simplicity which God has shown me should characterize the life of his followers. There has been less and less interest in, and devotion to, the cause of God. I ask, Wherein have those who profess confidence in the Testimonies sought to live according to the light given in them? Wherein have they regarded the warnings given? Wherein have they heeded the instructions they have received?"[1]

[1] Vol. 2, pp. 452, 453. (1870.)

NOT TO TAKE THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE.

That the Testimonies were not given to take the place of the Bible, the following extract from a testimony published in 1876 will show: —

"Bro. R would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the word of God; but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of his people to his word, to give them a clearer understanding of it."[2] "The word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind, and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study, are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow."[3] "The word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the

[1] Vol. 2, pp. 483, 484. (1870.) [2] Vol. 4, p. 246. (1876.)
[3] Vol. 2, p. 455. (1870.)

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Testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles."[1]

April 3, 1871, this matter was presented to me in a dream. I seemed to be attending an important meeting, at which a large company were assembled. "Many were bowed before God in earnest prayer, and they seemed to be burdened. They were importuning the Lord for special light. A few seemed to be in agony of spirit; their feelings were intense; with tears they were crying aloud for help and light. Our most prominent brethren were engaged in this most impressive scene. Bro. S was prostrated upon the floor, apparently in deep distress. His wife was sitting among a company of indifferent scorners. She looked as though she desired all to understand that she scorned those who were thus humiliating themselves.

"I dreamed that the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose amid cries and prayers, and said, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. I feel urged to say to you that you must commence to work individually for yourselves. You are looking to God and desiring him to do the work for you which he has left for you to do. If you will do the work for yourselves which you know that you ought to do, then God will help you when you need help. You have left undone the very things which God has left for you to do. You have been calling upon God to do your work. Had you followed the light which he has given you, then he would cause more light to shine upon you; but while you neglect the counsels, warnings, and reproofs that have been given, how can you expect God to give you more light and blessings to neglect and despise? God is not as man; he will not be trifled with

"I took the precious Bible, and surrounded it with the several Testimonies to the Church, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all

[1] Vol. 4, p. 323. (1879.)

are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line, and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the Testimonies. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that he has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.

"The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of his word. The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow-man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given, and in his own chosen way brought them before the people, to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse.

"Pride, self-love, selfishness, hatred, envy, and jealousy have beclouded the perceptive powers, and the truth, which would make you wise unto salvation, has lost its power to charm and control the mind. The very essential principles of godliness are not understood, because there is not a hungering and thirsting for Bible knowledge, purity of heart, and holiness of life. The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it, and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.

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"I said further, As the word of God is walled in with these books and pamphlets, so has God walled you in with reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragements. Here you are crying before God, in the anguish of your souls, for more light. I am authorized from God to tell you that not another ray of light through the Testimonies will shine upon your pathway, until you make a practical use of the light already given. The Lord has walled you about with light; but you have not appreciated the light; you have trampled upon it. While some have despised the light, others have neglected it, or followed it but indifferently. A few have set their hearts to obey the light which God has been pleased to give them.

"Some that have received special warnings through testimony, have forgotten in a few weeks the reproof given. The testimonies to some have been several times repeated; but they have not thought them of sufficient importance to be carefully heeded. They have been to them like idle tales. Had they regarded the light given, they would have avoided losses and trials which they think are hard and severe. They have only themselves to censure. They have placed upon their own necks a yoke which they find grievous to be borne. It is not the yoke which Christ has bound upon them. God's care and love were exercised in their behalf; but their selfish, evil, unbelieving souls could not discern his goodness and mercy. They rush on in their own wisdom, until, overwhelmed with trials and confused with perplexity, they are ensnared by Satan. When you gather up the rays of light which God has given in the past, then will he give an increase of light.

"I referred them to ancient Israel. God gave them his law; but they would not obey it. He then gave them ceremonies and ordinances, that in the performance of these, God might be kept in remembrance. They were so prone to forget him and his claims upon them, that it was necessary to keep their minds stirred up to realize their obligations to obey and honor their Creator. Had they been obedient, and loved to keep God's commandments, the multitude of ceremonies and ordinances would not have been required.

"If the people who now profess to be God's peculiar treasure would obey his requirements, as specified in his word, special testimonies would not be given to awaken them to their duty, and impress upon them their sinfulness and their fearful danger in neglecting to obey the word of God. Consciences have been blunted, because light has been set aside, neglected, and despised. . . .

"One stood by my side, and said: 'God has raised you up, and has given you words to speak to the people and to reach hearts, as he has given to no other one. He has shaped your testimonies to meet cases that are in need of help. You must be unmoved by scorn, derision, reproach, and censure. In order to be God's special instrument, you should lean to no one, but hang upon him alone, and, like the clinging vine, let your tendrils entwine about him. He will make you a means through which to communicate his light to the people. You must daily gather strength from God, in order to be fortified, that your surroundings may not dim or eclipse the light that he has permitted to shine upon his people through you. It is Satan's special object to prevent this light from coming to the people of God, who so greatly need it amid the perils of these last days.

"'Your success is in your simplicity. As soon as you depart from this, and fashion your testimony to meet the minds of any, your power is gone. Almost everything in this age is glossed and unreal. The world abounds in testimonies given to please and charm for the moment, and to exalt self. Your testimony is of a different character. It is to come down to the minutiæ of life, keeping the feeble faith from dying, and pressing home upon believers the necessity of shining as lights in the world.

"'God has given you your testimony, to set before the backslider and the sinner his true condition, and

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the immense loss he is sustaining by continuing a life of sin. God has impressed this upon you by opening it before your vision as he has to no other one now living, and according to the light he has given you, will he hold you responsible. Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins.'"[1]

WRONG USE OF THE TESTIMONIES.

Some who believe the Testimonies, have erred by urging them unduly upon others. In Vol. 1, No. 8, is a testimony bearing upon this point. "There were some in —— who were God's children, and yet doubted the visions. Others had no opposition, yet dared not take a decided stand in regard to them. Some were skeptical, and they had sufficient cause to make them so. The false visions and fanatical exercises, and the wretched fruits following, had an influence upon the cause in ——, to make minds jealous of everything bearing the name of visions. All these things should have been taken into consideration, and wisdom exercised. There should be no trial or labor with those who have never seen the individual having visions, and who have had no personal knowledge of the influence of the visions. Such should not be deprived of the benefits and privileges of the church, if their Christian course is otherwise correct. . . .

"Some, I was shown, could receive the published visions, judging of the tree by its fruits. Others are like doubting Thomas; they cannot believe the published Testimonies, nor receive evidence through the testimony of others, but must see and have the evidence for themselves. Such must not be set aside, but long patience and brotherly love should be exercised toward them until they find their position and become established for or against. If they fight against the visions, of which they have no knowledge; if they

[1] Vol. 2, pp. 604-608. (1871.)

carry their opposition so far as to oppose that in which they have had no experience, . . . the church may know that they are not right."[1]

Some of our brethren had had long experience in the truth, and for years had been acquainted with me and my work. They had proved the truthfulness of the Testimonies, and had asserted their belief in them. They had felt the powerful influence of the Spirit of God resting upon them to witness to their truthfulness. I was shown that if such, when reproved through the Testimonies, should rise up against them, and work secretly to lessen their influence, they should be faithfully dealt with; for their course would endanger those who were lacking in experience.[2]

The first number of the Testimonies ever published, contains a warning against the injudicious use of the light which is thus given to God's people.[3] I stated that some had taken an unwise course; when they had talked their faith to unbelievers, and the proof had been asked for, they had read from my writings, instead of going to the Bible for proof. It was shown me that this course was inconsistent, and would prejudice unbelievers against the truth. The Testimonies can have no weight with those who know nothing of their spirit. They should not be referred to in such cases.

Other warnings concerning the use of the Testimonies have been given from time to time, as follows: —

"Some of the preachers are far behind. They profess to believe the testimony borne, and some do harm by making them an iron rule for those who have had no experience in reference to them, but they fail to carry them out themselves. They have had repeated testimonies, which they have utterly disregarded. The course of such is not consistent."[4]

"I saw that many have taken advantage of what God has shown in regard to the sins and wrongs of

[1] Vol. 1, p. 328. (1862.) [2] See Vol. 1, p. 382. [3] See Vol. 1, p. 119.
[4] Vol. 1, p. 369. (1863.)

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others. They have taken the extreme meaning of what has been shown in vision, and then have pressed it until it has had a tendency to weaken the faith of many in what God has shown, and also to discourage and dishearten the church."[1]

The enemy will seize upon everything which he can use to destroy souls. "Testimonies have been borne in favor of individuals occupying important positions. They commence well to lift the burdens and act their part in connection with the work of God. But Satan pursues them with his temptations, and they are finally overcome. As others look upon their wrong course, Satan suggests to their minds that there must be a mistake in the testimonies given for these persons, else these men would not have proved themselves unworthy to bear a part in the work of God."

Thus doubts arise in regard to the light that God has given. "That which can be said of men under certain circumstances, cannot be said of them under other circumstances. Men are so weak in moral power, and so supremely selfish, so self-sufficient, and so easily puffed up with vain conceit, that God cannot work in connection with them; and they are left to move like blind men, and to manifest so great weakness and folly that many are astonished that such individuals should ever have been accepted, and acknowledged as worthy of having any connection with God's work. This is just what Satan designed. This was his object from the time he first specially tempted them to reproach the cause of God, and to cast reflections upon the Testimonies. Had they remained where their influence would not have been specially felt upon the cause of God, Satan would not have beset them so fiercely; for he could not have accomplished his purpose by using them as his instruments to do a special work."[2]

[1] Vol. 1, p. 166. (1857.) [2] Vol. 3, pp. 469, 470. (1875.)

TO BE JUDGED BY THEIR FRUITS.

Let the Testimonies be judged by their fruits. What is the spirit of their teaching? What has been the result of their influence? "All who desire to do so can acquaint themselves with the fruits of these visions. For seventeen years, God has seen fit to let them survive and strengthen against the opposition of Satan's forces, and the influence of human agencies that have aided Satan in his work."[1]

"God is either teaching his church, reproving their wrongs, and strengthening their faith, or he is not. This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work . . . bears the stamp of God, or the stamp of the enemy. There is no half-way work in the matter. The Testimonies are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil."[2]

As the Lord has manifested himself through the Spirit of prophecy, "past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent, and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work of the last thirty-six years from above, or from beneath?"[3]

Christ warned his disciples: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring

[1] Vol. 1, p. 330. (1862.) [2] Vol. 4, p. 230. [3] Test. 31, pp. 60, 61. (1882.)

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forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Here is a test, and all can apply it if they will. Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief.

DOUBTING THE TESTIMONIES.

"It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the Testimonies." "Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work. The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded." "Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the Testimonies which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable, and ends in destruction."[1] "By giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, and by cherishing feelings of distrust and cruel jealousies, they are preparing themselves for complete deception. They rise up with bitter feelings against the ones who dare to speak of their errors and reprove their sins."[2]

A testimony for certain young men, first published in 1880, speaks of this point as follows: "A prevailing skepticism is continually increasing in reference to the Testimonies of the Spirit of God; and these youth encourage questionings and doubts instead of removing them, because they are ignorant of the spirit and power and force of the Testimonies."[3]

I was shown that many had so little spirituality that they did not understand the value of the Testimonies or their real object. They talked flippantly of the Testimonies given by God for the benefit of his people, and passed judgment upon them, giving their opinion and criticising this and that, when they would better have placed their hands upon their lips, and prostrated themselves in the dust; for they could not appreciate the spirit of the Testimonies, because they knew so little of the Spirit of God.[1]

"There are some in —— who have never fully submitted to reproof. They have taken a course of their own choosing. They have ever, to a greater or less degree, exerted an influence against those who have stood up to defend the right and reprove the wrong. The influence of these persons upon individuals who come here, and who are brought in contact with them, is very bad. They fill the minds of these new-comers with questions and doubts in regard to the Testimonies of the Spirit of God. They put false constructions upon the Testimonies; and instead of leading persons to become consecrated to God, and to listen to the voice of the church, they teach them to be independent, and not to mind the opinions and judgment of others. The influence of this class has been secretly at work. Some are unconscious of the harm they are doing; but, unconsecrated, proud, and rebellious themselves, they lead others in the wrong track. A poisonous atmosphere is inhaled from these unconsecrated ones. The blood of souls is in the garments of such, and Christ will say to them in the day of final settlement, Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. Astonished they will be; but their professedly Christian lives were a deception, a fraud."[2]

"Some express their views that the testimony of Sister White cannot be reliable. This is all that many unconsecrated ones want. The testimonies of reproof have checked their vanity and pride; but if they dared, they would go to almost any length in fashion and pride. God will give all such an opportunity to prove themselves and to develop their true character."[3]

[1] Vol. 4, p. 211; vol. 1, p. 236. [2] Vol. 3, p. 328. [3] Vol. 4, p. 437.

[1] Vol. 4, p. 443. [2] Vol. 4, pp. 513, 514. (1880.) [3] Vol. 3, p. 313. (1873.)

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"I saw that the reason why visions had not been more frequent of late, is, they have not been appreciated by the church. The church have nearly lost their spirituality and faith, and the reproofs and warnings have had but little effect upon them. Many of those who have professed faith in them have not heeded them."[1]

"If you lose confidence in the Testimonies, you will drift away from Bible truth. I have been fearful that many would take a questioning, doubting position, and in my distress for your souls I would warn you. How many will heed the warning? As you now hold the Testimonies, should one be given crossing your track, correcting your errors, would you feel at perfect liberty to accept or reject any part or the whole? That which you will be least inclined to receive, is the very part most needed."[2]

"My brethren, beware of the evil heart of unbelief. The word of God is plain and close in its restrictions; it interferes with your selfish indulgence; therefore you do not obey it. The Testimonies of his Spirit call your attention to the Scriptures, point out your defects of character, and rebuke your sins; therefore you do not heed them. And to justify your carnal, ease-loving course, you begin to doubt whether the Testimonies are from God. If you would obey their teachings, you would be assured of their divine origin. Remember, your unbelief does not affect their truthfulness. If they are from God, they will stand."[3]

"I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof, is shutting away the light from God's people. Unbelief is closing their eyes, so that they are ignorant of their true condition." "They think the testimony of the Spirit of God in reproof is uncalled for, or that it does not mean them. Such are in the greatest need of the grace of God and spiritual discernment, that

[1] Vol. 1, p. 119. (1855.) [2] Test. 31, p. 94. (1882.) [3] Test. 31, p. 230.

they may discover their deficiency in spiritual knowledge."[1]

"Many who have backslidden from the truth, assign as a reason for their course that they do not have faith in the Testimonies. . . . The question now is, Will they yield their idol which God condemns, or will they continue in their wrong course of indulgence, and reject the light God has given them, reproving the very things in which they delight? The question to be settled with them is, Shall I deny myself and receive as of God the Testimonies which reprove my sins, or shall I reject the Testimonies *because* they reprove my sins?

"In many cases the Testimonies are fully received, the sin and indulgence broken off, and reformation at once commences in harmony with the light God has given. In other instances, sinful indulgences are cherished, the Testimonies are rejected, and many excuses which are untrue are offered to others as the reason for refusing to receive them. The *true* reason is not given. It is a lack of moral courage, — a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits."[2]

"Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving, and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit; and all should decide from the weight of evidence."[3] "God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding, will be left in the cold, chilling atmos-

[1] Vol. 3, pp. 255, 253, 254. (1873.) [2] Vol. 4, p. 32. (1876.)
[3] Vol. 3, p. 255. (1873.)

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phere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith."[1]

DUTY TO GIVE REPROOF.

"If wrongs are apparent among his people, and if the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are alike guilty, and will just as surely receive the displeasure of God; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty. In vision I have been pointed to many instances where the displeasure of God has been incurred by a neglect on the part of his servants to deal with the wrongs and sins existing among them. Those who have excused these wrongs, have been thought by the people to be very amiable and lovely in disposition, simply because they shunned to discharge a plain, scriptural duty. The task was not agreeable to their feelings, therefore they avoided it."[2]

The searching testimony of the Spirit of God "will separate those from Israel who have ever been at war with the means that God has ordained to keep corruptions out of the church. Wrongs must be called wrongs. Grievous sins must be called by their right name. All of God's people should come nearer to him. . . . Then will they see sin in the true light, and will realize how offensive it is in the sight of God."[3] "The plain, strait testimony must live in the church, or the curse of God will rest upon his people as surely as it did upon ancient Israel because of their sins."[4]

"Never was there greater need of faithful warnings and reproofs . . . than at this very time. Satan has come down with great power, knowing that his time is short. He is flooding the world with pleasing fables, and the people of God love to have smooth things spoken to them. . . . I was shown that God's people must make more firm, determined efforts to

[1] Vol. 4, pp. 232, 233. (1876.)
[2] Vol. 3, p. 266. (1873.)
[3] Vol 3, p. 324. (1873.)
[4] Vol. 3, p. 269. (1873.)

press back the incoming darkness. The close work of the Spirit of God is needed now as never before."[1]

When in my youth I accepted the work given me by God, I received with it a promise that I should have special aid from the mighty Helper. There was given me also the solemn charge to deliver faithfully the Lord's message, making no difference for friends or foes. There is no respect of persons with God. Whether dealing with rich or poor, high or low, the cultured or the ignorant, there must be no betrayal of sacred trusts with the Lord's messenger.

"Let none entertain the thought that I regret or take back any plain testimony I have borne to individuals or to the people. If I have erred anywhere, it is in not rebuking sin more decidedly and firmly. Some of the brethren have taken the responsibility of criticising my work and proposing an easier way to correct wrongs. To these persons I would say, I take God's way, and not yours. What I have said or written in testimony or reproof has not been too plainly expressed. . . .

"Those who would in any way lessen the force of the sharp reproofs which God has given me to speak, must meet their work at the Judgment. . . . To those who have taken the responsibility to reprove me, and in their finite judgment to propose a way which appears wiser to them, I repeat, I do not accept your efforts. Leave me with God, and let him teach me. I will take the words from the Lord, and speak them to the people. I do not expect that all will accept the reproof, and reform their lives; but I must discharge my duty all the same. I will walk in humility before God, doing my work for time and for eternity.

"God has not given my brethren the work that he has given me. It has been urged that my manner of giving reproof in public has led others to be sharp and critical and severe. If so, they must settle that matter with the Lord. If others take a responsibility

[1] Vol. 3, pp. 327, 328. (1873.)

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which God has not laid upon them, if they disregard the instructions he has given them again and again through the humble instrument of his choice, to be kind, patient, and forbearing, they alone must answer for the results. With a sorrow-burdened heart, I have performed my unpleasant duty to my dearest friends, not daring to please myself by withholding reproof, even from my husband; and I shall not be less faithful in warning others, whether they will hear or forbear. When I am speaking to the people, I say much that I have not premeditated. The Spirit of the Lord frequently comes upon me. I seem to be carried out of, and away from, myself; the life and character of different persons are clearly presented before my mind. I see their errors and dangers, and feel compelled to speak of what is thus brought before me. I dare not resist the Spirit of God."[1]

REJECTION OF REPROOF.

"Many now despise the faithful reproof given of God in testimony. I have been shown that some in these days have even gone so far as to burn the written words of rebuke and warning, as did the wicked king of Israel. But opposition to God's threatenings will not hinder their execution. To defy the words of the Lord, spoken through his chosen instruments, will only provoke his anger, and eventually bring certain ruin upon the offender. Indignation often kindles in the heart of the sinner against the agent whom God chooses to deliver his reproofs. It has ever been thus, and the same spirit exists to-day that persecuted and imprisoned Jeremiah for obeying the word of the Lord."[2]

From the beginning of my work, as I have been called to bear a plain, pointed testimony, to reprove wrongs, and to spare not, there have been those who have stood in opposition to my testimony, and have followed after to speak smooth things, to daub with untempered mortar, and to destroy the influence of

[1] Test. 31, pp. 15-17. (1882.)

[2] Vol. 4, p. 180. (1876.)

my labors. The Lord would move upon me to bear reproof, and then individuals would step in between me and the people to make my testimony of no effect.

"In almost every case where reproof is necessary, there will be some who entirely overlook the fact that the Spirit of the Lord has been grieved, and his cause reproached. These will pity those who deserved reproof, because personal feelings have been hurt. All this unsanctified sympathy places the sympathizers where they are sharers in the guilt of the one reproved. In nine cases out of ten, if the one reproved had been left under a sense of his wrongs, he might have been helped to see them, and thereby have been reformed. But meddlesome, unsanctified sympathizers place altogether a wrong construction upon the motives of the reprover and the nature of the reproof given, and by sympathizing with the one reproved, lead him to feel that he has been really abused; and his feelings rise up in rebellion against the one who has only done his duty. Those who faithfully discharge their unpleasant duties under a sense of their accountability to God, will receive his blessing."[1]

"There are some in these last days who will cry, 'Speak unto us smooth things; prophesy deceits.' But this is not my work. God has set me as a reprover of his people; and just so surely as he has laid upon me the heavy burden, he will make those to whom this message is given responsible for the manner in which they treat it. God will not be trifled with, and those who despise his work will receive according to their deeds. I have not chosen this unpleasant labor for myself. It is not a work which will bring to me the favor or praise of men. It is a work which but few will appreciate. But those who seek to make my labor doubly hard by their misrepresentations, jealous suspicions, and unbelief, thus creating prejudice in the minds of others against the testimonies God has given me, and limiting my work,

[1] Vol. 3, p. 359. (1875.)

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have the matter to settle with God, while I shall go forward as Providence and my brethren may open the way before me. In the name and strength of my Redeemer, I shall do what I can. . . . My duty is not to please myself, but to do the will of my heavenly Father, who has given me my work."[1]

If God has given me a message to bear to his people, those who would hinder me in the work and lessen the faith of the people in its truth, are not fighting against the instrument, but against God. "It is not the instrument whom you slight and insult, but God, who has spoken to you in these warnings and reproofs." "It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities that he has appointed to lead them."[2]

NEGLECT OF THE TESTIMONIES.

It is not alone those who openly reject the Testimonies, or who cherish doubt concerning them, that are on dangerous ground. To disregard light is to reject it.

"Some of you in words acknowledge reproof; but you do not in heart accept it. You go on the same as before, only being less susceptible to the influence of the Spirit of God, becoming more and more blinded, having less wisdom, less self-control, less moral power, and less zeal and relish for religious exercises; and, unless converted, you will finally yield your hold upon God entirely. You have not made decided changes in your life when reproof has come, because you have not seen and realized your defects of character, and the great contrast between your life and the life of Christ." "What do your prayers amount to while you regard iniquity in your hearts? Unless you make a thorough change, you will, not far hence, become weary of reproof, as did the children of Israel; and, like them, you will apostatize from God."[3]

[1] Vol. 4, pp 231, 232. (1876.) [2] Test. 31, p. 231; Vol. 3, p. 355.
[3] Vol. 4, p. 332. (1879.)

"Many are going directly contrary to the light which God has given to his people, because they do not read the books which contain the light and knowledge, in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. The cares of the world, the love of fashion, and the lack of religion, have turned the attention from the light God has so graciously given, while books and periodicals containing error are traveling all over the country. Skepticism and infidelity are increasing everywhere. Light so precious, coming from the throne of God, is hid under a bushel. God will make his people responsible for this neglect. An account must be rendered to him for every ray of light he has let shine upon our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things, or rejected because it was more agreeable to follow inclination."

"The volumes of 'Spirit of Prophecy,'[1] and also the Testimonies, should be introduced into every Sabbath-keeping family, and the brethren should know their value, and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure, and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family, and be read again and again. Let them be kept where they can be read by many."[2]

Let ministers and people remember that gospel truth hardens when it does not save. The rejection of light leaves men captives, bound about by chains of darkness and unbelief. "The soul that refuses to listen to the invitations of mercy from day to day, can soon listen to the most urgent appeals without an emotion stirring his soul. As laborers with God, we need more fervent piety, and less self-exaltation. The more self is exalted, the more will faith in the Testimonies of the Spirit of God be lessened. . . . Those who trust wholly in themselves will see less and less of God in the Testimonies of his Spirit."[3]

[1] "The Great Controversy." [2] Vol. 4, pp. 391, 390. (1880.)
[3] Test. 31, p. 130. (1882.)

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HOW TO RECEIVE REPROOF.

"Those who are reproved by the Spirit of God, should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin."[1] It is not pleasing to human nature to receive reproof, nor is it possible for the heart of man, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, to realize the necessity of reproof, or the blessing it is designed to bring. As man yields to temptation, and indulges in sin, his mind becomes darkened. The moral sense is perverted. The warnings of conscience are disregarded, and its voice is less clearly heard. He gradually loses the power to distinguish between right and wrong, until he has no true sense of his standing before God. He may observe the forms of religion, and zealously maintain its doctrines, while destitute of its spirit. His condition is that described by the True Witness,—"Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and *knowest not* that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." When the Spirit of God, by message of reproof, declares this to be his condition, he cannot see that the message is true. Is he therefore to reject the warning?—No. God has given sufficient evidence, so that all who desire to do so may satisfy themselves as to the character of the Testimonies; and having acknowledged them to be from God, it is their duty to accept reproof, even though they do not themselves see the sinfulness of their course. If they fully realized their condition, what would be the need of reproof? Because they know it not, God mercifully sets it before them, so that they may repent and reform before it shall be too late. "Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived; but those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them."[1] "Those

[1] Vol. 3, p. 257. (1873.)

who are most closely connected with God are the ones who know his voice when he speaks to them. Those who are spiritual discern spiritual things. Such will feel grateful that the Lord has pointed out their errors."[1]

"David learned wisdom from God's dealings with him, and bowed in humility beneath the chastisement of the Most High. The faithful portrayal of his true state by the prophet Nathan, made David acquainted with his own sins, and aided him to put them away. He accepted counsel meekly, and humiliated himself before God. 'The law of the Lord,' he exclaims, 'is perfect, converting the soul.'"[2]

"If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye . . . not sons." Our Lord has said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Though bitter the discipline, it is appointed by a Father's tender love, "that we might be *partakers of his holiness*."

AN UNWARRANTED DISTINCTION.

Some have taken the position that the warnings, cautions, and reproofs given by the Lord through his servant, unless they come through special vision for each individual case, should have no more weight than counsels and warnings from other sources. In some cases it has been represented that in giving a testimony for churches or individuals, I have been influenced to write as I did by letters received from members of the church. There have been those who claimed that testimonies purporting to be given by the Spirit of God were merely the expression of my own judgment, based upon information gathered from human sources. This statement is utterly false. If, however, in response to some question, statement, or appeal from churches or individuals, a testimony is written presenting the light which God has given con-

[1] Test. 31, p. 130. [2] Vol. 4, pp. 14, 15. (1876.)

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cerning them, the fact that it has been called forth in this manner in no wise detracts from its validity or importance. I quote from Testimony 31 a few paragraphs bearing directly upon this point: —

"How was it with the apostle Paul? The news he received through the household of Chloe concerning the condition of the church at Corinth, was what caused him to write his first epistle to that church. Private letters had come to him, stating the facts as they existed, and in his answer he laid down general principles, which, if heeded, would correct the existing evils. With great tenderness and wisdom, he exhorts them to all speak the same things, that there be no divisions among them.

"Paul was an inspired apostle, yet the Lord did not reveal to him at all times just the condition of his people. Those who were interested in the prosperity of the church, and saw evils creeping in, presented the matter before him, and from the light which he had previously received, he was prepared to judge of the true character of these developments. Because the Lord had not given him a new revelation for that special time, those who were really seeking light did not cast his message aside as only a common letter. No, indeed. The Lord had shown him the difficulties and dangers which would arise in the churches, that when they should develop, he might know just how to treat them.

"He was set for the defense of the church; he was to watch for souls as one that must render account to God; and should he not take notice of the reports concerning their state of anarchy and division?— Most assuredly; and the reproof he sent them was written just as much under the inspiration of the Spirit of God as were any of his epistles. But when these reproofs came, some would not be corrected. They took the position that God had not spoken to them through Paul, that he had merely given them his opinion as a man, and they regarded their own judgment as good as that of Paul. So it is with many among

our people who have drifted away from the old landmarks, and who have followed their own understanding."[1]

When this position is taken by our people, then the special warnings and counsels of God through the Spirit of prophecy can have no influence with them to work a reformation in life and character. The Lord does not give a vision to meet each emergency which may arise in the different attitudes of his people in the development of his work. But he has shown me that it has been his way of dealing with his church in past ages, to impress the minds of his chosen servants with the needs and dangers of his cause and of individuals, and to lay upon them the burden of counsel and warning.

So in many cases God has given me light in regard to peculiar defects of character in members of the church, and the dangers to the individual and the cause if these defects are not removed. Under certain circumstances, wrong tendencies are liable to become strongly developed and confirmed, and to work injury to the cause of God, and ruin to the individual. Sometimes, when special dangers threaten the cause of God or particular individuals, a communication comes to me from the Lord, either in a dream or a vision of the night, and these cases are brought vividly to my mind. I hear a voice saying to me, "Arise and write; these souls are in peril." I obey the movings of the Spirit of God, and my pen traces their true condition. As I travel, and stand before the people in different places, the Spirit of the Lord brings before me clearly the cases I have been shown, reviving the matter previously given me.

For the last forty-five years the Lord has been revealing to me the needs of his cause, and the cases of individuals in every phase of experience, showing where and how they have failed to perfect Christian character. The history of hundreds of cases has been presented to me, and that which God approves, and

[1] Test. 31, pp. 61, 62. (1882.)

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that which he condemns, has been plainly set before me. God has shown me that a certain course, if followed, or certain traits of character, if indulged, would produce certain results. He has thus been training and disciplining me in order that I might see the dangers which threaten souls, and instruct and warn his people, line upon line, precept upon precept, that they might not be ignorant of Satan's devices, and might escape his snares.

The work which the Lord has laid out before me especially, is to urge young and old, learned and unlearned, to search the Scriptures for themselves; to impress upon all that the study of God's word will expand the mind and strengthen every faculty, fitting the intellect to wrestle with problems of truth, deep and far-reaching; to assure all that the clear knowledge of the Bible outdoes all other knowledge in making man what God designed he should be. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." With the light communicated through the study of his word, with the special knowledge given of individual cases among his people under all circumstances and in every phase of experience, can I now be in the same ignorance, the same mental uncertainty and spiritual blindness, as at the beginning of this experience? Will my brethren say that Sister White has been so dull a scholar that her judgment in this direction is no better than before she entered Christ's school, to be trained and disciplined for a special work? Am I no more intelligent in regard to the duties and perils of God's people than are those before whom these things have never been presented? I would not dishonor my Maker by admitting that all this light, all the display of his mighty power in my work and experience, has been valueless, that it has not educated my judgment or better fitted me for his work.

When I see men and women taking the very course, or cherishing the very traits, which have imperiled other souls and wounded the cause of God, and which

the Lord has reproved again and again, how can I but be alarmed? When I see timid souls, burdened with a sense of their imperfections, yet conscientiously striving to do what God has said is right, and know that the Lord looks down and smiles on their faithful efforts, shall I not speak a word of encouragement to these poor trembling hearts? Shall I hold my peace because each individual case has not been pointed out to me in direct vision?

"But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hands. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

In a recent dream I was brought before an assembly of people, some of whom were making efforts to remove the impression of a most solemn testimony of warning that I had given them. They said, "We believe Sister White's testimonies; but when she tells us things that she has not directly seen in vision in the particular case under consideration, her words are of no more account to us than the words of any other person." The Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose and rebuked them in the name of the Lord. I repeated in substance that which I have presented above, in regard to the watchman. This, I said, is appropriate to your case and to mine.

Now if those to whom these solemn warnings are addressed say, "It is only Sister White's individual opinion, I shall still follow my own judgment," and if

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they continue to do the very things they were warned not to do, they show that they despise the counsel of God, and the result is just what the Spirit of God has shown me it would be, — injury to the cause of God, and ruin to themselves. Some who wish to strengthen their own position, will bring forward from the Testimonies statements which they think will support their views, and will put the strongest possible construction upon them; but that which questions their course of action, or which does not coincide with their views, they pronounce Sister White's opinion, denying its heavenly origin, and placing it on a level with their own judgment.

If you, my brethren, who have been acquainted with me and my work for many years, take the position that my counsel is of no more value than the counsel of those who have not been specially educated for this work, then do not ask me to unite with you in labor; for while you occupy this position, you will inevitably counteract the influence of my work. If you feel just as safe in following your own impulses as in following the light given by God's delegated servant, the peril is your own; you will be condemned because you rejected the light which Heaven had sent you.

While at ——, the Lord came to me in the night season, and spoke precious words of encouragement concerning my work, repeating the same message that had been given me several times before. With regard to those who have turned from the light sent them, he said, "In slighting and rejecting the testimony that I have given you to bear, it is not you, but me, your Lord, that they have slighted."

If those who are headstrong and full of self-esteem go on unchecked in their course, what will be the condition of things in the church? How are the wrongs to be corrected which exist in these strong-willed, ambitious ones? By what means will God reach them? How will he set his church in order? Differences of opinion are constantly arising, and apostasies often afflict the church. When controversy or division comes in, all parties claim to be right and to have a conscience void of offense; and they will not be instructed by those who have long borne the burden of the work, and who, they have reason to know, have been guided by the Lord. Light has been sent to dispel their darkness, but they are too proud of heart to accept it, and they choose the darkness. They despise the counsel of God, because it does not coincide with their views and plans, and favor their wrong traits of character. The work of the Spirit of God, which would bring them into the right position if they would accept it, has not come in a way to please them, and to flatter their self-righteousness. The light which God has given is no light to them, and they wander in darkness. They claim that no more confidence is to be placed in the judgment of one who has had such a long experience, and whom the Lord has taught and used to do a special work, than in that of any other person. Is it God's plan that they should do thus, or is it the special working of the enemy of all righteousness to hold souls in error, to bind them in strong delusions that cannot be broken, because they have placed themselves beyond the reach of means that God has ordained to deal with his church?

The reproofs, the cautions, the corrections of the Lord, have been given to his church in all ages of the world. These warnings were despised and rejected in Christ's day by the self-righteous Pharisees, who claimed that they needed no such reproof, and were unjustly dealt with. They would not receive the word of the Lord through his servants, because it did not please their inclinations. Should the Lord give a vision right before this class of people in our day, pointing out their mistakes, rebuking their self-righteousness and condemning their sins, they would rise up in rebellion, like the inhabitants of Nazareth when Christ showed them their true condition.

If these persons do not humble their hearts before God, if they harbor the suggestions of Satan, doubt and infidelity will take possession of the soul, and

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they will see everything in a false light. Let the seeds of doubt once be sown in their hearts, and they will have an abundant harvest to reap. They will come to mistrust and disbelieve truths which are plain and full of beauty to others who have not educated themselves in unbelief. Those who train the mind to seize upon everything which they can use as a peg to hang a doubt upon, and suggest these thoughts to other minds, will always find occasion to doubt. They will question and criticise everything that arises in the unfolding of truth, criticise the work and position of others, criticise every branch of the work in which they have not themselves a part. They will feed upon the errors and mistakes and faults of others, "until," said the angel, "the Lord Jesus shall rise up from his mediatorial work in the heavenly sanctuary, and shall clothe himself with the garments of vengeance, and surprise them at their unholy feast; and they will find themselves unprepared for the marriage supper of the Lamb." Their taste has been so perverted that they would be inclined to criticise even the table of the Lord in his kingdom.

Has God ever revealed to these self-deceived ones, that no reproofs or corrections from him are to have any weight with them unless they come through direct vision? I dwell upon this point, because the position that many are now taking upon it is a delusion of Satan to ruin souls. When he has ensnared and weakened them through his sophistry, so that when they are reproved, they persist in making of none effect the workings of God's Spirit, his triumph over them will be complete. Some who profess righteousness will, like Judas, betray their Lord into the hands of his bitterest enemies. These self-confident ones, determined to have their own way, and to advocate their own ideas, will go on from bad to worse, until they will pursue any course rather than to give up their own will. They will go on blindly in the way of evil; but like the deluded Pharisees, so self-deceived that they think they are doing God's service.

Christ portrayed the course which a certain class will take, when they have a chance to develop their true character: "And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death."

God has given me a marked, solemn experience in connection with his work; and you may be assured that so long as my life is spared, I shall not cease to lift a warning voice as I am impressed by the Spirit of God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. I have no special wisdom in myself; I am only an instrument in the Lord's hands to do the work he has set for me to do. The instructions that I have given by pen or voice have been an expression of the light that God has given me. I have tried to place before you the principles that the Spirit of God has for years been impressing upon my mind and writing on my heart.

And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the Testimonies. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven, and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the Testimonies speak not according to the word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united. For Christ's sake, do not confuse the minds of the people with human sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall, "and be snared, and be taken."

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UNFOUNDED REPORTS.

SEVERAL times during the past winter[1] I have met the report that during the Conference at Minneapolis, "Sister White was shown that the Judgment, which since 1844 had been passing upon the righteous dead, had now begun upon the living." This report is not true. A similar rumor, which has been afloat for about two years, originated in this wise: In a letter written from Basel, Switzerland, to a minister in California, I made a remark substantially as follows: "The Judgment has been over forty years in progress on the cases of the dead, and we know not how soon it will pass to the cases of the living." The letter was read to different persons, and careless hearers reported what they thought they heard. Thus the matter started. The report from Minneapolis arose from some one's misunderstanding of a statement to the same effect as the one quoted from the letter. There is no other foundation for either report than this.

Secondly, report has it that a minister now living has been seen by me in vision as saved in the kingdom of God, thus representing that his final salvation is assured. There is no truth whatever in this statement. The word of God lays down the conditions of our salvation, and it rests wholly with ourselves whether or not we will comply with them.

Says the Revelator: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. *He that overcometh*, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye

[1] 1888–89.

look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, *beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*" "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you; to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." "Now the just shall live by faith; but *if any man draw back*, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

Here we have the Bible election plainly stated. Here are specified who shall be crowned in the city of God, and who shall have no part with the just. "*Blessed are they that do his commandments*, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

The third report states that in the Conference at Minneapolis, "Sister White confessed that in some of her remarks at that meeting she had been in error, and had manifested a wrong spirit." This report also is wholly without foundation. I could not forbear giving to the Conference the light that God had given me. This I presented both in messages of warning and reproof and in words of hope and faith. But nothing spoken by me at that meeting has been taken back, or confessed to be wrong. I still view matters from the same standpoint, and am of the same mind, as when at Minneapolis. All the dangers which I then saw, and which brought such a burden upon me, have been more clearly developed since that meeting. As I become more fully acquainted with the condition of our churches, I see that every warning given at Minneapolis was needed.

The influence of this report from Minneapolis, tended to destroy confidence in all reproofs and

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warnings given by me to the people. One example of this I will here relate.

A sister connected with one of our missions had been reproved for her wrong influence over the young people with whom she was associated. She had encouraged a spirit of lightness, trifling, and frivolity, which grieved away the Spirit of God, and which was demoralizing to the workers. When the report came by letter from Minneapolis concerning Sister White's wrong course which called for a confession there, the relatives of Sister T at once remarked, "Well, if Sister White was wrong in regard to matters in the Conference at Minneapolis, and had to confess this, she may have made a mistake as to the message she gave my sister, and may have to confess that also." And they justified the wrong-doer in her course. Since that time, however, Sister T has acknowledged the wrong for which she was reproved. Those who originated and spread the report, have exerted an influence to embolden wrong-doers in rejecting reproof, and souls have thus been imperiled. Let all who have engaged in this work beware lest the blood of these souls be found upon them in the great day of final Judgment.

The cases mentioned will serve to show how little reliance can be placed upon reports concerning what I have done or taught. During my labors in connection with the work of the Lord, I have not made it a practice to vindicate my own cause, or to contradict reports that have been put in circulation in regard to myself. To do this would occupy my time to the neglect of the work which God has appointed me. These matters I have left to Him who has a care for his servants and his cause.

But I would say to my brethren, Beware how you give credence to such reports. The Saviour bade his disciples, "Take heed therefore how ye hear." And he speaks of a certain class that hear and will not understand, lest they should be converted and be healed. Again he said, "Take heed what ye hear." "He that is of God heareth God's words."

Those who listened to the words of Christ, heard and reported his teaching just according to the spirit that was in them. It is ever thus with those who hear God's word. The manner in which they understand and receive it, depends upon the spirit which dwells in their hearts.

There are many who put their own construction upon what they hear, making the thought appear altogether different from that which the speaker endeavored to express. Some, hearing through the medium of their own prejudices or prepossessions, understand the matter as they desire it to be, — as will best suit their purpose, — and so report it. Following the promptings of an unsanctified heart, they construe into evil that which, rightly understood, might be a means of great good.

Again: an expression perfectly true and right in itself, may be wholly distorted by transmission through several curious, careless, or caviling minds. Well-meaning persons are often careless, and make grievous mistakes; and it is not likely that others will report more correctly. One who has himself not fully understood a speaker's meaning, repeats a remark or assertion, giving to it his own coloring. It makes an impression on the hearer just according to his prejudices and imaginings. He reports it to a third, who in turn adds a little more, and sends it forward; and before any of them are aware of what they are doing, they have accomplished the purpose of Satan in planting the seeds of doubt, jealousy, and suspicion in many minds.

If persons listen to God's message of reproof, warning, or encouragement while their hearts are filled with prejudice, they will not understand the true import of that which was sent them to be a savor of life unto life. Satan stands by to present everything to their understanding in a false light. But the soul that is hungering and thirsting for divine knowledge will hear aright, and will obtain the precious blessings that God designs to convey to them. Their minds are under the influence of his Holy Spirit, and

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they hear aright. When hearts are purified from selfishness and egotism, they are in harmony with the message God sends them. The perceptions are quickened, the sensibilities refined. Like appreciates like. "He that is of God heareth God's words."

And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say, Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works. Are there any points of interest concerning which she has not written, do not eagerly catch up and report rumors as to what she has said.

A MIRACLE COUNTERFEITED.

SOME have found difficulty in reconciling a statement in "Testimonies for the Church," Vol. I., p. 292, with one in "Great Controversy," Vol. I., p. 184. These passages refer to the work of the sorcerers in counterfeiting the miracle performed by Aaron, of turning the rod to a serpent. The Testimony says: "The magicians could not perform all those miracles which God wrought through Moses. Only a few of them could they do. The magicians' rods did become serpents, but Aaron's rod swallowed them up." This last sentence, which is the one in question, is substantially the same as the Bible statement: "They cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents; but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." The statement in Vol. I. of the "Controversy," is, "The magicians seemed to perform several things with their enchantments similar to those things which God wrought by the hand of Moses and Aaron. They did not really cause their rods to become serpents, but by magic, aided by the great deceiver, made them appear like serpents, to counterfeit the work of God." This

statement, instead of contradicting the former, is simply explanatory of it.

There is not, in the Testimony, a full expression of the thought which I wished to convey. On page 293 is a sentence which makes the meaning clearer: "The magicians wrought not by their own science alone, but by the power of their god, the devil, who ingeniously carried out his deceptive work of *counterfeiting* the work of God." Moses, by the power of God, had changed the rod to a living serpent. Satan, through the magicians, *counterfeited* this miracle. He could not produce living serpents, for he has not power to create, or to give life. This power belongs to God alone. But all that Satan could do he did: he produced a *counterfeit*. By his power, working through the magicians, he caused the rods to assume the appearance of serpents.

The statement that they did become serpents, simply means that they were such in appearance; such they were believed to be by Pharaoh and his court. There was nothing in their appearance to distinguish them from the serpent produced by Moses and Aaron; but while one was real, the others were spurious. And the Lord caused the living serpent to swallow up the pretended ones.

Pharaoh desired to justify his stubbornness in resisting the divine command; he was seeking some excuse to disregard the miracle which God had wrought through Moses. Satan gave him just what he wanted. By the work which he wrought through the magicians he made it appear to the Egyptians that Moses and Aaron were only magicians and sorcerers, and hence that the message which they brought would not claim respect as coming from a superior being.

Even the swallowing up of the counterfeit serpents was not regarded by Pharaoh as the special work of God's power, but as accomplished by a kind of magic superior to that of his servants. Thus this counterfeit work emboldened him in his rebellion, causing him to fortify himself against conviction.

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It was by the display of supernatural power, in making the serpent his medium, that Satan caused the fall of Adam and Eve in Eden. Before the close of time he will work still greater wonders. So far as his power extends, he will perform actual miracles. Says the Scripture, "He deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do,"—not merely those which he pretends to do. Something more than mere impostures is brought to view in this scripture. But there is a limit beyond which Satan cannot go; and here he calls deception to his aid, and counterfeits the work which he has not power actually to perform. In the last days he will appear in such a manner as to make men believe him to be Christ come the second time into the world. He will indeed transform himself into an angel of light. But while he will bear the appearance of Christ in every particular, so far as mere appearance goes, it will deceive none but those who, like Pharaoh, are seeking to resist the truth.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE A PROOF OF ITS INSPIRATION.

"CANST thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?" "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." "I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." It is impossible for the finite minds of men to fully comprehend the character or the works of the Infinite One. To the keenest intellect,

to the most powerful and highly educated mind, that holy Being must ever remain clothed in mystery.

The apostle Paul exclaims, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" But though "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the foundation of his throne."[1] We can so far comprehend his dealing with us, and the motives by which he is actuated, that we may discern boundless love and mercy united to infinite power. We can understand as much of his purposes as it is for our good to know; and beyond this we must still trust the might of the Omnipotent, the love and wisdom of the Father and Sovereign of all.

The word of God, like the character of its divine Author, presents mysteries which can never be fully comprehended by finite beings. It directs our minds to the Creator, who dwelleth "in the light which no man can approach unto." It presents to us his purposes, which embrace all the ages of human history, and which will reach their fulfillment only in the endless cycles of eternity. It calls our attention to subjects of infinite depth and importance, relating to the government of God and the destiny of man.

The entrance of sin into the world, the incarnation of Christ, regeneration, the resurrection, and many other subjects presented in the Bible, are mysteries too deep for the human mind to explain, or even to fully comprehend. But God has given us in the Scriptures sufficient evidence of their divine character, and we are not to doubt his word because we cannot understand all the mysteries of his providence.

The portions of Holy Writ presenting these great themes are not to be passed by as of no use to man. All that God has seen fit to make known, we are to accept upon the authority of his word. Only a bare statement of facts may be given, with no explanation as to why or how; but though we cannot comprehend

[1] Revised Version.

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it, we should rest content that it is true, because God has said it. All the difficulty lies in the weakness and narrowness of the human mind.

The apostle Peter says that there are in Scripture "things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest . . . unto their own destruction." The difficulties of Scripture have been urged by skeptics as an argument against the Bible; but so far from this, they constitute a strong evidence of its divine inspiration. If it contained no account of God but that which we could easily comprehend; if his greatness and majesty could be grasped by finite minds, then the Bible would not bear the unmistakable credentials of divine authority. The very grandeur and mystery of the themes presented, should inspire faith in it as the word of God.

The Bible unfolds truth with a simplicity and a perfect adaptation to the needs and longings of the human heart, that has astonished and charmed the most highly cultivated minds, while it enables the humble and uncultured to discern the way of salvation. And yet these simply stated truths lay hold upon subjects so elevated, so far-reaching, so infinitely beyond the power of human comprehension, that we can accept them only because God has declared them. Thus, the plan of redemption is laid open to us, so that every soul may see the steps he is to take in repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be saved in God's appointed way; yet beneath these truths, so easily understood, lie mysteries which are the hiding of His glory, — mysteries which overpower the mind in its research, yet inspire the sincere seeker for truth with reverence and faith. The more he searches the Bible, the deeper is his conviction that it is the word of the living God, and human reason bows before the majesty of divine revelation.

Those are blessed with clearest light who are willing thus to accept the living oracles upon the authority of God. If asked to explain certain statements,

they can only answer, "It is so presented in the Scriptures." They are obliged to acknowledge that they cannot explain the operation of divine power, or the manifestation of divine wisdom. It is as the Lord intended it should be, that we find ourselves compelled to accept some things solely by faith. To acknowledge this, is only to admit that the finite mind is inadequate to grasp the infinite; that man, with his limited, human knowledge, cannot understand the purposes of Omniscience.

Because they cannot fathom all its mysteries, the skeptic and the infidel reject God's word; and not all who profess to believe the Bible are secure from temptation on this point. Says the apostle, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Minds that have been educated to criticise, to doubt and cavil because they cannot search into the purposes of God, will "fall after the same example of unbelief." It is right to study closely the teaching of the Bible, and to search into "the deep things of God," so far as they are revealed in Scripture. While "the secret things belong unto the Lord our God," "those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children." But it is Satan's work to pervert the investigative powers of the mind. A certain pride is mingled with the consideration of Bible truth, so that men feel defeated and impatient if they cannot explain every portion of Scripture to their satisfaction. It is too humiliating to them to acknowledge that they do not understand the inspired words. They are unwilling to wait patiently until God shall see fit to reveal the truth to them. They feel that their unaided human wisdom is sufficient to enable them to comprehend the Scripture; and failing to do this, they virtually deny its authority. It is true that many theories and doctrines popularly supposed to be the teaching of the Bible, have no foundation in Scripture, and, indeed, are contrary to the whole tenor of inspiration. These

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things have been a cause of doubt and perplexity to many minds. They are not, however, chargeable to God's word, but to man's perversion of it. But the difficulties in the Bible do not reflect upon the wisdom of God; they will not cause the ruin of any who would not have been destroyed if no such difficulties had existed. Had there been no mysteries in the Bible for them to question, the same minds would, through their own lack of spiritual discernment, have found cause of stumbling in the plainest utterances of God.

Men who imagine themselves endowed with mental powers of so high an order that they can find an explanation of all the ways and works of God, are seeking to exalt human wisdom to an equality with the divine, and to glorify man as God. They are only repeating that which Satan declared to Eve in Eden, —"Ye shall be as gods." Satan fell because of his ambition to be equal with God. He desired to enter into the divine counsels and purposes, from which he was excluded by his own inability, as a created being, to comprehend the wisdom of the Infinite One. It was this ambitious pride that led to his rebellion, and by the same means he seeks to cause the ruin of man.

There are mysteries in the plan of redemption,—the humiliation of the Son of God, that he might be found in fashion as a man, the wonderful love and condescension of the Father in yielding up his Son,—that are to the heavenly angels subjects of continual amazement. The apostle Peter, speaking of the revelations given to the prophets of "the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow," says that these are things which "the angels desire to look into." And these will be the study of the redeemed through eternal ages. As they contemplate the work of God in creation and redemption, new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. As they learn more and more of the wisdom, the love, and the power of God, their minds will be

constantly expanding, and their joy will continually increase.

If it were possible for created beings to attain to a full understanding of God and his works, then, having reached this point, there would be for them no further discovery of truth, no growth in knowledge, no further development of mind or heart. God would no longer be supreme; and men, having reached the limit of knowledge and attainment, would cease to advance. Let us thank God that it is not so. God is infinite; in him are "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." And to all eternity men may be ever searching, ever learning, and yet they can never exhaust the treasures of his wisdom, his goodness, and his power.

God intends that, even in this life, truth shall be ever unfolding to his people. There is only one way in which this knowledge can be obtained. We can attain to an understanding of God's word only through the illumination of that Spirit by which the word was given. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God;" "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." And the Saviour's promise to his followers was, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. . . . For he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

God desires man to exercise his reasoning powers; and the study of the Bible will strengthen and elevate the mind as no other study can do. It is the best mental as well as spiritual exercise for the human mind. Yet we are to beware of deifying reason, which is subject to the weakness and infirmity of humanity. If we would not have the Scriptures clouded to our understanding, so that the plainest truths shall not be comprehended, we must have the simplicity and faith of a little child, ready to learn, and beseeching the aid of the Holy Spirit. A sense of the power and wisdom of God, and of our inability to comprehend his greatness, should inspire us with

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humility, and we should open his word, as we would enter his presence, with holy awe. When we come to the Bible, reason must acknowledge an authority superior to itself, and heart and intellect must bow to the great I AM.

We shall advance in true spiritual knowledge, only as we realize our own littleness, and our entire dependence upon God; but all who come to the Bible with a teachable and prayerful spirit, to study its utterances as the word of God, will receive divine enlightenment. There are many things apparently difficult or obscure, which God will make plain and simple to those who thus seek an understanding of them.

It is sometimes the case that men of intellectual ability, improved by education and culture, fail to comprehend certain passages of Scripture, while others who are uneducated, whose understanding seems weak and whose minds are undisciplined, will grasp the meaning, finding strength and comfort in that which the former declare to be mysterious, or pass by as unimportant. Why is this? — It has been explained to me that the latter class do not rely upon their own understanding. They go to the Source of light, the One who has inspired the Scriptures, and with humility of heart ask God for wisdom, and they receive it. There are mines of truth yet to be discovered by the earnest seeker. Christ represented the truth as treasure hid in a field. It does not lie right upon the surface; we must dig for it. But our success in finding it, does not depend so much on our intellectual ability as on our humility of heart, and the faith which will lay hold upon divine aid.

Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we shall be continually liable to wrest the Scriptures or to misinterpret them. There is much reading of the Bible that is without profit, and in many cases is a positive injury. When the word of God is opened without reverence and without prayer; when the thoughts and affections are not fixed upon God or

in harmony with his will, the mind is clouded with doubt; and in the very study of the Bible, skepticism strengthens. The enemy takes control of the thoughts, and he suggests interpretations that are not correct.

Whenever men are not seeking, in word and deed, to be in harmony with God, then, however learned they may be, they are liable to err in their understanding of Scripture, and it is not safe to trust to their explanations. When we are truly seeking to do God's will, the Holy Spirit takes the precepts of his word, and makes them the principles of the life, writing them on the tablets of the soul. And it is only those who are following the light already given that can hope to receive the further illumination of the Spirit. This is plainly stated in the words of Christ, "If any man will *do* His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Those who look to the Scriptures to find discrepancies, have not spiritual insight. With distorted vision they will see many causes for doubt and unbelief in things that are really plain and simple. But to those who take God's word with reverence, seeking to learn his will that they may obey it, all is changed. They are filled with awe and wonder as they contemplate the purity and exalted excellence of the truths revealed. Like attracts like. Like appreciates like. Holiness allies itself with holiness, faith with faith. To the humble heart and the sincere, inquiring mind, the Bible is full of light and knowledge. Those who come to the Scriptures in this spirit, are brought into fellowship with prophets and apostles. Their spirit assimilates to that of Christ, and they long to become one with him.

Many feel that a responsibility rests upon them to explain every seeming difficulty in the Bible, in order to meet the cavils of skeptics and infidels. But in trying to explain that which they but imperfectly understand, they are in danger of confusing the minds of others in reference to points that are clear, and

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easy to be understood. This is not our work. Nor should we lament that these difficulties exist, but accept them as permitted by the wisdom of God. It is our duty to receive his word, which is plain on every point essential to the salvation of the soul, and practice its principles in our life, teaching them to others both by precept and example. Thus it will be evident to the world that we have a connection with God, and implicit confidence in his word. A life of godliness, a daily example of integrity, meekness, and unselfish love, will be a living exemplification of the teaching of God's word, and it will be an argument in favor of the Bible which few will be able to resist. This will prove the most effectual check to the prevailing tendency to skepticism and infidelity.

By faith we should look to the hereafter, and grasp the pledge of God, of a growth of intellect, the human faculties uniting with the divine, and every power of the soul being brought into direct contact with the Source of light. We may rejoice that all that has perplexed us in the providences of God will then be made plain; things hard to be understood will find an explanation; and where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken purposes, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. Says the apostle Paul, "Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

Peter exhorts his brethren to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of his word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the

Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion.

The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people, should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what.

I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth, know not what they believe. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. They have no just appreciation of the work for the present time. When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance. And there are many in the church who take it for granted that they understand what they believe, but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith, and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth. Certain it is that there has been among us a departure from the living God, and a turning to men, putting human in place of divine wisdom.

God will arouse his people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe his word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to

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a diligent study of the Scriptures, and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold. . God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith, they may able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.

Agitate, agitate, agitate. The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith, we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny. With those who have educated themselves as debaters, there is great danger that they will not handle the word of God with fairness. In meeting an opponent it should be our earnest effort to present subjects in such a manner as to awaken conviction in his mind, instead of seeking merely to give confidence to the believer.

Whatever may be man's intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study, clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others.

When God's people are at ease, and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that he will not favor them. It is his will that they should

be ever moving forward, to receive the increased and ever-increasing light which is shining for them. The present attitude of the church is not pleasing to God. There has come in a self-confidence that has led them to feel no necessity for more truth and greater light. We are living at a time when Satan is at work on the right hand and on the left, before and behind us; and yet as a people we are asleep. God wills that a voice shall be heard arousing his people to action.

Instead of opening the soul to receive rays of light from heaven, some have been working in an opposite direction. Both through the press and from the pulpit have been presented views in regard to the inspiration of the Bible, which have not the sanction of the Spirit or the word of God. Certain it is that no man or set of men should undertake to advance theories upon a subject of so great importance, without a plain "Thus saith the Lord" to sustain them. And when men, compassed with human infirmities, affected in a greater or less degree by surrounding influences, and having hereditary and cultivated tendencies which are far from making them wise or heavenly-minded, undertake to arraign the word of God, and to pass judgment upon what is divine and what is human, they are working without the counsel of God. The Lord will not prosper such a work. The effect will be disastrous, both upon the one engaged in it and upon those who accept it as a work from God. Skepticism has been aroused in many minds by the theories presented as to the nature of inspiration. Finite beings, with their narrow, short-sighted views, feel themselves competent to criticise the Scriptures, saying, "This passage is needful, and that passage is not needful, and is not inspired."

Christ gave no such instruction in regard to the Old-Testament Scriptures, the only part of the Bible which the people of his time possessed. His teachings were designed to direct their minds to the Old Testament, and to bring into clearer light the great themes there presented. For ages, the people of Is-

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rael had been separating themselves from God, and they had lost sight of precious truths which he had committed to them. These truths were covered up with superstitious forms and ceremonies that concealed their true significance. Christ came to remove the rubbish which had obscured their luster. He placed them, as precious gems, in a new setting. He showed that so far from disdaining the repetition of old, familiar truths, he came to make them appear in their true force and beauty, the glory of which had never been discerned by the men of his time. Himself the Author of these revealed truths, he could open to the people their true meaning, freeing them from the misinterpretations and false theories adopted by the leaders to suit their own unconsecrated condition, their destitution of spirituality and the love of God. He cast aside that which had robbed these truths of life and vital power, and gave them back to the world in all their original freshness and force.

If we have the Spirit of Christ, and are laborers together with him, it is ours to carry forward the work which he came to do. The truths of the Bible have again become obscured by custom, tradition, and false doctrine. The erroneous teachings of popular theology have made thousands upon thousands of skeptics and infidels. There are errors and inconsistencies which many denounce as the teaching of the Bible, that are really false interpretations of Scripture, adopted during the ages of papal darkness. Multitudes have been led to cherish an erroneous conception of God, as the Jews, misled by the errors and traditions of their time, had a false conception of Christ. "Had they *known*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." It is ours to reveal to the world the true character of God. Instead of criticising the Bible, let us seek, by precept and example, to present to the world its sacred, life-giving truths, that we may "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

The evils that have been gradually creeping in among us have imperceptibly led individuals and churches away from reverence for God, and have shut away the power which he desires to give them.

My brethren, let the word of God stand just as it is. Let not human wisdom presume to lessen the force of one statement of the Scriptures. The solemn denunciation in the Revelation should warn us against taking such ground. In the name of my Master I bid you, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

THE IMPENDING CONFLICT.

A GREAT crisis awaits the people of God. A crisis awaits the world. The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. Events which for more than forty years we have, upon the authority of the prophetic word, declared to be impending, are now taking place before our eyes. Already the question of an amendment to the Constitution restricting liberty of conscience, has been urged upon the legislators of the nation. The question of enforcing Sunday observance has become one of national interest and importance. We well know what the result of this movement will be. But are we ready for the issue? Have we faithfully discharged the duty which God has committed to us, of giving the people warning of the danger before them?

There are many, even of those engaged in this movement for Sunday enforcement, who are blinded to the results which will follow this action. They do not see that they are striking directly against religious liberty. There are many who have never understood the claims of the Bible Sabbath and the false foundation upon which the Sunday institution rests. Any movement in favor of religious legislation is really an act of concession to the papacy, which for so many

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ages has steadily warred against liberty of conscience. Sunday observance owes its existence as a so-called Christian institution to the "mystery of iniquity;" and its enforcement will be a virtual recognition of the principles which are the very corner-stone of Romanism. When our nation shall so abjure the principles of its government as to enact a Sunday law, Protestantism will in this act join hands with popery; it will be nothing else than giving life to the tyranny which has long been eagerly watching its opportunity to spring again into active despotism.

The National Reform movement, exercising the power of religious legislation, will, when fully developed, manifest the same intolerance and oppression that have prevailed in past ages. Human councils then assumed the prerogatives of Deity, crushing under their despotic power liberty of conscience; and imprisonment, exile, and death followed, for those who opposed their dictates. If popery or its principles shall again be legislated into power, the fires of persecution will be rekindled against those who will not sacrifice conscience and the truth in deference to popular errors. This evil is on the point of realization.

When God has given us light showing the dangers before us, how can we stand clear in his sight if we neglect to put forth every effort in our power to bring it before the people? Can we be content to leave them to meet this momentous issue unwarned?

There is a prospect before us of a continued struggle, at the risk of imprisonment, loss of property, and even of life itself, to defend the law of God, which is made void by the laws of men. In this situation worldly policy will urge an outward compliance with the laws of the land, for the sake of peace and harmony. And there are some who will even urge such a course from the scripture, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. . . . The powers that be are ordained of God."

But what has been the course of God's servants in ages past? When the disciples preached Christ and him crucified, after his resurrection, the authorities commanded them not to speak any more nor to teach in the name of Jesus. "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." They continued to preach the good news of salvation through Christ; and the power of God witnessed to the message. The sick were healed, and thousands were added to the church. "Then the high priest rose up, and all that were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison."

But the God of heaven, the mighty Ruler of the universe, took this matter into his own hands; for men were warring against his work. He showed them plainly that there is a ruler above man, whose authority must be respected. The Lord sent his angel by night to open the prison doors; and he brought forth these men whom God had commissioned to do his work. The rulers said, "Speak not at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus;" but the heavenly messenger sent by God, said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."

Those who seek to compel men to observe an institution of the papacy, and trample upon God's authority, are doing a work similar to that of the Jewish leaders in the days of the apostles. When the laws of earthly rulers are brought into opposition to the laws of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, then those who are God's loyal subjects will be true to him.

We as a people have not accomplished the work which God has committed to us. We are not ready for the issue to which the enforcement of the Sunday law will bring us. It is our duty, as we see the signs

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of approaching peril, to arouse to action. Let none sit in calm expectation of the evil, comforting themselves with the belief that this work must go on because prophecy has foretold it, and that the Lord will shelter his people. We are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience. Fervent, effectual prayer should be ascending to heaven that this calamity may be deferred until we can accomplish the work which has so long been neglected. Let there be most earnest prayer; and then let us work in harmony with our prayers. It may appear that Satan is triumphant, and that truth is overborne with falsehood and error; the people over whom God has spread his shield, and the country which has been an asylum for the conscience-oppressed servants of God and defenders of his truth, may be placed in jeopardy. But God would have us recall his dealings with his people in the past, to save them from their enemies. He has always chosen extremities, when there seemed no possible chance for deliverance from Satan's workings, for the manifestation of his power. Man's necessity is God's opportunity. It may be that a respite may yet be granted for God's people to awake, and let their light shine. If the presence of ten righteous persons would have saved the wicked cities of the plain, is it not possible that God will yet, in answer to the prayers of his people, hold in check the workings of those who are making void his law? Shall we not humble our hearts greatly before God, flee to the mercy-seat, and plead with him to reveal his mighty power?

If our people continue in the listless attitude in which they have been, God cannot pour upon them his Spirit. They are unprepared to co-operate with him. They are not awake to the situation, and do not realize the threatened danger. They should feel now, as never before, their need of vigilance and concerted action.

The peculiar work of the third angel has not been seen in its importance. God meant that his people

should be far in advance of the position which they occupy to-day. But now, when the time has come for them to spring into action, they have the preparation to make. When the National Reformers began to urge measures to restrict religious liberty, our leading men should have been alive to the situation, and should have labored earnestly to counteract these efforts. It is not in the order of God that light has been kept from our people, — the very present truth which they needed for this time. Not all our ministers who are giving the third angel's message, really understand what constitutes that message. The National Reform movement has been regarded by some as of so little importance that they have not thought it necessary to give much attention to it, and have even felt that in so doing, they would be giving time to questions distinct from the third angel's message. May the Lord forgive our brethren for thus interpreting the very message for this time.

The people need to be aroused in regard to the dangers of the present time. The watchmen are asleep. We are years behind. Let the chief watchmen feel the urgent necessity of taking heed to themselves, lest they lose the opportunities given them to see the dangers.

If the leading men in our Conferences do not now accept the message sent them by God, and fall into line for action, the churches will suffer great loss. When the watchman, seeing the sword coming, gives the trumpet a certain sound, the people along the line will echo the warning, and all will have opportunity to make ready for the conflict. But too often the leader has stood hesitating, seeming to say, "Let us not be in too great haste. There may be a mistake. We must be careful not to raise a false alarm." The very hesitancy and uncertainty on his part is crying, "Peace and safety." "Do not get excited. Be not alarmed. There is a great deal more made of this Religious Amendment question than is demanded. This agitation will all

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die down." Thus he virtually denies the message sent from God; and the warning which was designed to stir the churches, fails to do its work. The trumpet of the watchman gives no certain sound, and the people do not prepare for the battle. Let the watchman beware lest through his hesitancy and delay, souls shall be left to perish, and their blood shall be required at his hand.

We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; and now that the movement is right upon us, we ask, Will our people do their duty in the matter? Can we not assist in lifting the standard, and in calling to the front those who have a regard for their religious rights and privileges? The time is fast approaching when those who choose to obey God rather than man, will be made to feel the hand of oppression. Shall we then dishonor God by keeping silent while his holy commandments are trodden under foot?

While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, let us arouse to comprehend the situation, and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice, and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history, and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed.

God calls upon us to awake, for the end is near. Every passing hour is one of activity in the heavenly courts, to make ready a people upon the earth to act a part in the great scenes that are soon to open upon us. These passing moments, that seem of so little value to us, are weighty with eternal interests. They are molding the destiny of souls for everlasting life or eternal death. The words we utter to-day in the ears of the people, the works we are doing, the spirit of the message we are bearing, will be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

My brethren, do you realize that your own salvation, as well as the destiny of other souls, depends upon the preparation you now make for the trial before us? Have you that intensity of zeal, that piety and devotion, which will enable you to stand when opposition shall be brought against you? If God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when you will be brought before councils, and every position of truth which you hold will be severely criticised. The time that so many are now allowing to go to waste should be devoted to the charge that God has given us, of preparing for the approaching crisis.

The law of God should be loved and honored by his true people now more than ever before. There is the most imperative necessity of urging the injunction of Christ upon the minds and hearts of all believers, men and women, youth and children: "Search the Scriptures." Study your Bible as you have never studied it before. Unless you arise to a higher, holier state in your religious life, you will not be ready for the appearing of our Lord. As great light has been given, God expects corresponding zeal, faithfulness, and devotion on the part of his people. There must be more spirituality, a deeper consecration to God, and a zeal in his work that has never yet been reached. Much time should be spent in prayer, that our garments of character may be washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Especially should we, with unwavering faith, seek God for grace and power to be given to his people now. We do not believe that the time has fully come when he would have our liberties restricted. The prophet saw "four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." Another angel, ascending from the east, cried to them, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." This points out the work we have now to do. A vast

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responsibility is devolving upon men and women of prayer throughout the land, to petition that God will sweep back the cloud of evil, and give a few more years of grace in which to work for the Master. Let us cry to God that the angels may hold the four winds until missionaries shall be sent to all parts of the world, and shall proclaim the warning against disobeying the law of Jehovah.

THE "AMERICAN SENTINEL" AND ITS MISSION.

GOD employs various agencies in preparing his people to stand in the great crisis before us. He speaks by his word and by his ministers. He arouses the watchmen, and sends them forth with messages of warning, of reproof, and of instruction, that the people may be enlightened. The *Sentinel* has been, in God's order, one of the voices sounding the alarm, that the people might hear, and realize their danger, and do the work required at the present time. The Lord intends that his people shall heed whatever he sends them. When light is presented, it is their duty, not only to receive it, but to pass it along, adding their influence in its favor, that its full force may be felt in the church and the world. The *Sentinel* is like a trumpet giving a certain sound; and all our people should read it carefully, and then send it to some relative or friend, thus putting to the best use the light that God has given them.

For three years, warnings have been sounding forth to the world through the columns of the *Sentinel;* but those who profess to believe present truth have not been influenced by these danger signals as they should have been. Had our brethren used the *Sentinel* as it was their privilege to do, and had all been united in recommending it in every Conference and in every church, as God would have them do; had the attention of our people been called to this work, which

was so essential to be done for this time; had they appreciated the light which God permitted to shine upon them in warnings, in counsels, and in the delineation of events that are taking place, we should not now, as a people, be so far behind in making preparation for the work. There have been surprising indifference and inactivity in this time of peril. Truth, present truth, is what the people need; and if the startling significance of the movements now in progress in regard to the Religious Amendment, had been realized by our brethren in every church; if they had discerned in these movements the plain, direct fulfillment of prophecy, calling upon them to arouse to the demands of the crisis, they would not now be in such stupor and death-like slumber.

The word of God is not silent in regard to this momentous time, and it will be understood by all who do not resist his Spirit by determining not to hear, not to receive, not to obey. The Lord's messages of light have been before us for years; but there have been influences working indirectly to make of no effect the warnings coming through the *Sentinel* and the "Testimonies," and through other instrumentalities which the Lord sends to his people. Much more might have been done with the *Sentinel* if these counter-influences had not been at work to hinder it. Even though nothing may be said against it, actions reveal the indifference that is felt. And so long as the watchmen do not give the trumpet a certain sound, the people are not alarmed, and are not on the lookout for danger.

The rebuke of God is upon us because of our neglect of solemn responsibilities. His blessings have been withdrawn because the testimonies he has given have not been heeded by those who professed to believe them. O for a religious awakening! The angels of God are going from church to church, doing their duty; and Christ is knocking at the door of your hearts for entrance. But the means that God has devised to awaken the church to a sense of their

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spiritual destitution, have not been regarded. The voice of the True Witness has been heard in reproof, but has not been obeyed. Men have chosen to follow their own way, instead of God's way, because self was not crucified in them. Thus the light has had but little effect upon minds and hearts.

Will the people of God now arouse from their carnal lethargy? Will they make the most of present blessings and warnings, and let nothing come between their souls and the light God would have shine upon them? Let every worker for God comprehend the situation, and place the *Sentinel* before our churches, explaining its contents, and urging home the facts and warnings it contains. May the Lord help all to redeem the time! Let not unsanctified feelings lead any to resist the appeals of the Spirit of God. Stand not in the way of this light; let it not be disregarded or set aside as unworthy of attention or credence.

If you wait for light to come in a way that will please every one, you will wait in vain. If you wait for louder calls or better opportunities, the light will be withdrawn, and you will be left in darkness. Accept every ray of light that God sends. Men who neglect to heed the calls of the Spirit and word of God, because obedience involves a cross, will lose their souls. When the books are opened, and every man's work, and the motives that prompted him, are scrutinized by the Judge of all the earth, they will see what a loss they have sustained. We should ever cherish the fear of the Lord, and realize that, individually, we are standing before the Lord of hosts, and no thought, no word, no act in connection with the work of God, should savor of selfishness or of indifference.

WORKERS IN THE CAUSE.

THE fact that so large a number are associated together in the church at Battle Creek, and that so many important interests center there, makes it preeminently a missionary field. People from all parts of the country come to the Sanitarium, and many youth from different States attend the College. That field demands the most devoted, faithful workers, and the very best methods of labor, in order that a strong influence for Christ and the truth may be constantly exerted. When the work is conducted as God would have it, the saving power of the grace of Christ will be manifest among those who believe the truth, and they will be a light to others.

But there is at Battle Creek a sad neglect of the many advantages at hand to keep the heart of the work in a healthy condition. Vigorous heart-beats from the center should be felt in all parts of the body of believers. But if the heart is sickly, and weak in its action, all branches of the cause will be enfeebled. It is positively essential that there should be a sound, healthy working power at this central point, in order that the truth may be carried to all the world. The knowledge of this last warning must be diffused through families and communities everywhere; and it will require wise generalship both to devise plans, and to educate men to assist in the work.

As year by year the work extends, the need of experienced and faithful workers becomes more urgent; and if the people of the Lord walk in his counsel, such workers will be developed. While we should rely firmly upon God for wisdom and power, he would have us cultivate our ability to the fullest extent. As the workers acquire mental and spiritual power, and become acquainted with the purposes and dealings of God, they will have more comprehensive views of the work for this time, and will be

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better qualified both to devise and to execute plans for its advancement. Thus they may keep pace with the opening providence of God.

A constant effort should be put forth to enlist new workers. Talent should be discerned and recognized. Persons who possess piety and ability should be encouraged to obtain the necessary education, that they may be fitted to assist in spreading the light of truth. All who are competent to do so should be led to engage in some branch of the work, according to their capabilities.

The solemn and momentous work for this time is not to be carried forward to completion solely by the efforts of a few chosen men who have heretofore borne the responsibilities in the cause. When those whom God has called to aid in the accomplishment of a certain work shall have carried it as far as they can, with the ability he has given them, the Lord will not allow the work to stop at that stage. In his providence he will call and qualify others to unite with the first, that together they may advance still farther, and lift the standard higher.

But there are some minds that do not grow with the work; instead of adapting themselves to its increasing demands, they allow it to extend far beyond them, and thus they find themselves unable to comprehend or to meet the exigencies of the times. When men whom God is qualifying to bear responsibilities in the cause, take hold of it in a slightly different way from that in which it has hitherto been conducted, the older laborers should be careful that their course be not such as to hinder these helpers or to circumscribe the work. Some may not realize the importance of certain measures, simply because they do not see the necessities of the work in all its bearings, and do not themselves feel the burden which God has specially laid upon other men. Those who are not specially qualified to do a certain work, should beware that they do not stand in the way of others, and prevent them from fulfilling the purpose of God.

The case of David is to the point. He desired to build the temple of the Lord, and gathered together rich stores of material for this purpose. But the Lord told him that he was not to do that work; it must devolve upon Solomon, his son. David's large experience would enable him to counsel Solomon, and encourage him; but the younger man must build the temple. The weary, worn minds of the older laborers may not always see the greatness of the work, and they may not be inclined to keep pace with the opening providence of God; therefore weighty responsibilities should not rest wholly upon them. They might not bring into the work all the elements essential to its advancement, hence it would be retarded.

For the want of wise management, the work in Battle Creek and throughout the State of Michigan is far behind what it should be. While it is necessary for us to understand the situation and the needs of foreign missions, we should also be able to comprehend the needs of the work at our very doors. If rightly improved, the advantages which God has placed within our reach would enable us to send forth a much larger number of workers. There is need of vigorous work in our churches. The special message showing the important issues now pending, the duties and dangers of our time, should be presented before them, not in a tame, lifeless manner, but "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." Responsibilities must be laid upon the members of the church. The missionary spirit should be awakened as never before, and workers should be appointed as needed, who will act as pastors to the flock, putting forth personal effort to bring the church up to that condition where spiritual life and activity will be seen in all her borders.

Much talent has been lost to the cause, because men in responsible positions did not discern it. Their vision was not far-reaching enough to discover that the work was becoming altogether too extended to be carried forward by the workers then engaged. Much, very much, which should have been accomplished is

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still undone, because men have held things in their own hands instead of distributing the work among a larger number, and trusting that God would help them in their efforts. They have tried to carry forward all branches of the work, fearing that others would prove less efficient. Their will and judgment have controlled in these various departments, and because of their inability to grasp all the wants of the cause in its different parts, great losses have been sustained.

The lesson must be learned, that when God appoints means for a certain work, we are not to lay these aside, and then pray and expect that he will work a miracle to supply the lack. If the farmer fails to plow and sow, God does not by a miracle prevent the results of his neglect. Harvest-time finds his fields barren — there is no grain to be reaped, there are no sheaves to be garnered. God provided the seed and the soil, the sun and the rain; and if the husbandman had employed the means that were at his hand, he would have received according to his sowing and his labor.

There are great laws that govern the world of nature, and spiritual things are controlled by principles equally certain. The means for an end must be employed, if the desired results are to be attained. God has appointed to every man his work according to his ability. It is by education and practice that persons are to be qualified to meet any emergency which may arise, and wise planning is needed to place each one in his proper sphere, that he may obtain an experience which will fit him to bear responsibility.

But while education, training, and the counsel of those of experience are all essential, the workers should be taught that they are not to rely wholly upon any man's judgment. As God's free agents, all should ask wisdom of him. When the learner depends wholly upon another's thoughts, and goes no farther than to accept his plans, he sees only through that

man's eyes, and is, so far, only an echo of another. God deals with men as responsible beings. He will work by his Spirit through the mind he has put in man, if man will only give him a chance to work, and will recognize his dealings. He designs that each shall use his mind and conscience for himself. He does not intend that one man shall become the shadow of another, uttering only another's sentiments.

All should love their brethren, and respect and esteem their leaders; but they should not make them their burden-bearers. We are not to pour all our difficulties and perplexities into the minds of others, to wear them out. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." Jesus invites us, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The foundation of Christianity is Christ our righteousness. Men are individually accountable to God, and each must act as God moves upon him, not as he is moved by the mind of another; for if this manner of labor is pursued, souls cannot be impressed and directed by the Spirit of the great I AM. They will be kept under a restraint which allows no freedom of action or of choice.

It is not the will of God that his people in Battle Creek should remain in their present condition of coldness and inaction until by some mighty miracle-working power the church shall be aroused to life and activity. If we would be wise, and use diligently, prayerfully, and thankfully the means whereby light and blessing are to come to God's people, then no power upon earth would be able to withhold these gifts from us. But if we refuse God's means, we need not look for him to work a miracle to give us light and vigor and power; for this will never be done.

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The Lord has shown me that men in responsible positions are standing directly in the way of his work, because they think the work must be done and the blessing must come in a certain way, and they will not recognize that which comes in any other way. My brethren, may the Lord place this matter before you as it is. God does not work as men plan, or as they wish; he "moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." Why reject the Lord's methods of working, because they do not coincide with our ideas? God has his appointed channels of light, but these are not necessarily the minds of any particular set of men. When all shall take their appointed place in God's work, earnestly seeking wisdom and guidance from him, then a great advance will have been made toward letting light shine upon the world. When men shall cease to place themselves in the way, God will work among us as never before.

While extensive plans should be laid, great care must be taken that the work in each branch of the cause be harmoniously united with that in every other branch, thus making a perfect whole. But too often it has been the reverse of this; and as the result, the work has been defective. One man who has the oversight of a certain branch of the work, magnifies his responsibilities, until, in his estimation, that one department is above every other. When this narrow view is taken, a strong influence is exerted to lead others to see the matter in the same light. This is human nature, but it is not the spirit of Christ. Just in proportion as this policy is followed, Christ is crowded out of the work, and self appears prominent.

The principles that should actuate us as workers in God's cause are laid down by the apostle Paul. He says, "We are laborers together with God." "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, *as to the Lord*, and not unto men." And Peter exhorts the believers, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as

the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

When these principles control our hearts, we shall realize that the work is God's, not ours; that he has the same care for every part of the great whole. When Christ and his glory are made first, and love of self is swallowed up in love for souls for whom Christ died, then no worker will be so entirely absorbed in one branch of the cause as to lose sight of the importance of every other. It is selfishness which leads persons to think that the particular part of the work in which they are engaged is the most important of all.

It is selfishness also that prompts the feeling, on the part of workers, that their judgment must be the most reliable, and their methods of labor the best, or that it is their privilege in any way to bind the conscience of another. Such was the spirit of the Jewish leaders in Christ's day. In their self-exaltation the priests and rabbis brought in such rigid rules, and so many forms and ceremonies, as to divert the minds of the people from God, and leave him no chance to work for them. Thus his mercy and love were lost sight of. My brethren, do not follow in the same path. Let the minds of the people be directed to God. Leave him a chance to work for those who love him. Do not impose upon the people rules and regulations, which, if followed, would leave them as destitute of the Spirit of God as were the hills of Gilboa of dew or rain.

There is a deplorable lack of spirituality among our people. A great work must be done for them before they can become what Christ designed they should be, — the light of the world. For years I have felt deep anguish of soul as the Lord has presented before me the want in our churches of Jesus and his love. There has been a spirit of self-sufficiency, and a disposition to strive for position and supremacy. I have seen that self-glorification was

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becoming common among Seventh-day Adventists, and that unless the pride of man should be abased, and Christ exalted, we should, as a people, be in no better condition to receive Christ at his second advent than were the Jewish people to receive him at his first advent.

The Jews were looking for the Messiah; but he did not come as they had predicted that he would, and if he were accepted as the Promised One, their learned teachers would be forced to acknowledge that they had erred. These leaders had separated themselves from God, and Satan worked upon their minds to lead them to reject the Saviour. Rather than yield their pride of opinion, they closed their eyes to all the evidences of his Messiahship, and they not only rejected the message of salvation themselves, but they steeled the hearts of the people against Jesus. Their history should be a solemn warning to us. We need never expect that when the Lord has light for his people, Satan will stand calmly by, and make no effort to prevent them from receiving it. He will work upon minds to excite distrust and jealousy and unbelief. Let us beware that we do not refuse the light God sends, because it does not come in a way to please us. Let not God's blessing be turned away from us because we know not the time of our visitation. If there are any who do not see and accept the light themselves, let them not stand in the way of others. Let it not be said of this highly favored people, as of the Jews when the good news of the kingdom was preached to them, "They entered not in themselves, and them that were entering in they hindered."

We are taught in God's word that this is the time, above all others, when we may look for light from heaven. It is now that we are to expect a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We should watch for the movings of God's providence as the army of Israel watched for "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees," — the appointed signal that Heaven would work for them.

God cannot glorify his name through his people while they are leaning upon man, and making flesh their arm. Their present state of weakness will continue until Christ alone shall be exalted; until, with John the Baptist, they shall say from a humble and reverent heart, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Words have been given me to speak to the people of God: "Lift him up, the Man of Calvary. Let humanity stand back, that all may behold Him in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered. Says the prophet Isaiah, 'Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace.' Let the church and the world look upon their Redeemer. Let every voice proclaim with John, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'"

It is to the thirsting soul that the fountain of living waters is open. God declares, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." To souls that are earnestly seeking for light, and that accept with gladness every ray of divine illumination from his holy word, — to such alone light will be given. It is through these souls that God will reveal that light and power which will lighten the whole earth with his glory.

THE INESTIMABLE GIFT.

"BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him, . . . that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, . . . to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved; in whom we have redemp-

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tion through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

"God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the *exceeding riches* of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus."

Such are the words in which "Paul the aged," "the prisoner of Jesus Christ," writing from his prison-house at Rome, endeavored to set before his brethren that which he found language inadequate to express in its fullness, — "the unsearchable riches of Christ," — the treasure of grace freely offered to the fallen sons of men. The plan of redemption was laid by a sacrifice, a gift. Says the apostle: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." "God so loved the world that he *gave* his only begotten Son." Christ "*gave himself* for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." And as the crowning blessing of redemption, "*the gift of God* is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Surely there are none that, beholding the riches of His grace, can forbear to exclaim with the apostle, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

As the plan of redemption begins and ends with a gift, so it is to be carried forward. The same spirit of sacrifice which purchased salvation for us, will dwell in the hearts of all who become partakers of the heavenly gift. Says the apostle Peter, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." Said Jesus to his disciples as he sent

them forth, "Freely ye have received; freely give." In him who is fully in sympathy with Christ, there can be nothing selfish or exclusive. He who drinks of the living water will find that it is "in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The Spirit of Christ within him is like a spring welling up in the desert, flowing to refresh all, and making those who are ready to perish, eager to drink of the water of life. It was the same spirit of love and self-sacrifice which dwelt in Christ that impelled the apostle Paul to his manifold labors. "I am debtor," he says, "both to the Greeks and to the barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise." "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

Our Lord designed that his church should reflect to the world the fullness and sufficiency that we find in him. We are constantly receiving of God's bounty, and by imparting of the same we are to represent to the world the love and beneficence of Christ. While all heaven is astir, dispatching messengers to every part of the earth, to carry forward the work of redemption, the church of the living God are also to be co-laborers with Christ. We are members of his mystical body. He is the head, controlling all the members of the body. Jesus himself, in his infinite mercy, is working on human hearts, effecting spiritual transformations so amazing that angels look on with astonishment and joy. The same unselfish love that characterizes the Master is seen in the character and life of his true followers. Christ expects that men will become partakers of his divine nature, while in this world, thus not only reflecting his glory, to the praise of God, but illumining the darkness of the world with the radiance of heaven. Thus will be fulfilled the words of Christ, "Ye are the light of the world."

"We are laborers together with God," — "stewards of the manifold grace of God." The knowledge of

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God's grace, the truths of his word, and temporal gifts as well, — time and means, talents and influence, — are all a trust from God, to be employed to his glory and the salvation of men. Nothing can be more offensive to God, who is constantly bestowing his gifts upon man, than to see him selfishly grasping these gifts, and making no returns to the Giver. Jesus is to-day in heaven preparing mansions for those who love him; yes, more than mansions, a kingdom which is to be ours. But all who shall inherit these blessings must be partakers of the self-denial and self-sacrifice of Christ for the good of others.

Never was there greater need of earnest, self-sacrificing labor in the cause of Christ than now, when the hours of probation are fast closing, and the last message of mercy is to be given to the world. My soul is stirred within me as the Macedonian cry comes from every direction, from the cities and villages of our own land, from across the Atlantic and the broad Pacific, and from the islands of the sea, "Come over and help us." Brethren and sisters, will you answer the cry? saying: "We will do our best, both in sending you missionaries and money. We will deny ourselves in the embellishment of our houses, in the adornment of our persons, and in the gratification of appetite. We will give the means intrusted to us into the cause of God, and we will devote ourselves also unreservedly to his work." The wants of the cause are laid before us; the empty treasuries appeal to us most pathetically for help. One dollar now is of more value to the work than ten dollars will be at some future period.

Work, brethren, work while you have the opportunity, while the day lasts. Work, for "the night cometh, when no man can work." How soon that night may come, it is impossible for you to tell. Now is your opportunity; improve it. If there are some who cannot give personal effort in missionary work, let them live economically, and give of their

earnings. Thus they can contribute money to send papers and books to those who have not the light of truth; they can help pay the expenses of students who are fitting for missionary work. Let every dollar that you can spare be invested in the bank of heaven.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

These are the words of Jesus, who loved you so much that he gave his own life, that you might have a home with him in his kingdom. Do not dishonor your Lord, by disregarding his positive command.

God calls upon those who have possessions in lands and houses, to sell, and to invest the money where it will be supplying the great want in the missionary field. When once they have experienced the real satisfaction that comes from thus doing, they will keep the channel open, and the means the Lord intrusts to them will be constantly flowing into the treasury, that souls may be converted. These souls will, in their turn, practice the same self-denial, economy, and simplicity, for Christ's sake, that they, too, may bring their offerings to God. Through these talents, wisely invested, still other souls may be converted; and thus the work goes on, showing that the gifts of God are appreciated. The Giver is acknowledged, and glory redounds to him through the faithfulness of his stewards.

When we make these earnest appeals in behalf of the cause of God, and present the financial wants of our missions, conscientious souls who believe the truth are deeply stirred. Like the poor widow, whom Christ commended, who gave her two mites into the treasury, they give, in their poverty, to the utmost of their ability. Such often deprive them-

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selves even of the apparent necessities of life; while there are men and women who, possessing houses and lands, cling to their earthly treasure with selfish tenacity, and do not have faith enough in the message and in God to put their means into his work. To these last are especially applicable the words of Christ, "Sell that ye have, and give alms."

There are poor men and women who are writing to me for advice as to whether they shall sell their homes, and give the proceeds to the cause. They say the appeals for means stir their souls, and they want to do something for the Master who has done everything for them. I would say to such, "It may not be your duty to sell your little homes just now; but go to God for yourselves; the Lord will certainly hear your earnest prayers for wisdom to understand your duty." If there was more seeking God for heavenly wisdom, and less seeking wisdom from men, there would be far greater light from Heaven, and God would bless the humble seeker. But I can say to those to whom God has intrusted goods, who have lands and houses: "Commence your selling, and giving alms. Make no delay. God expects more of you than you have been willing to do." We call upon you who have means, to inquire with earnest prayer: What is the extent of the divine claim upon me and my property? There is work to be done now to make ready a people to stand in the day of the Lord. Means must be invested in the work of saving men, who, in turn, shall work for others. Be prompt in rendering to God his own. One reason why there is so great a dearth of the Spirit of God, is that so many are robbing God.

There is a lesson for us in the experience of the churches of Macedonia, as described by Paul. He says that they "first gave their own selves to the Lord." Then they were eager to give their means for Christ. "In a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their

power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves, praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift."

Paul lays down a rule for giving to God's cause, and tells us what the result will be both in regard to ourselves and to God. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." "This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, *always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.* (. . . Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God."

We are not to feel that we can do or give anything that will entitle us to the favor of God. Says the apostle, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" When David and the people of Israel had gathered together the material they had prepared for the building of the temple, the king, as he committed the treasure to the princes of the congregation, rejoiced and gave thanks to God in words that should ever dwell in the hearts of God's people. "David blessed the Lord before all the congregation; and David said, Blessed be thou, Jehovah, God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. . . . And in thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all

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things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee a house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own. I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things; and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee."

It was God who had provided the people with the riches of earth, and his Spirit had made them willing to bring their precious things for the temple. It was all of the Lord; if his divine power had not moved upon the hearts of the people, the king's efforts would have been in vain, and the temple would never have been erected.

All that men receive of God's bounty still belongs to God. Whatever he has bestowed in the valuable and beautiful things of earth, is placed in our hands to test us, — to sound the depths of our love for him and our appreciation of his favors. Whether it be the treasures of wealth or of intellect, they are to be laid, a willing offering, at the feet of Jesus.

None of us can do without the blessing of God, but God can do his work without the aid of man, if he so choose. But he has given to every man his work, and he trusts men with treasures of wealth or of intellect, as his stewards. Whatever we render to God is, through his mercy and generosity, placed to our account as faithful stewards. But we should ever realize that this is not a work of merit on man's part. However great the ability of man, he possesses nothing which God did not give him, and which he cannot withdraw, if these precious tokens of his favor are not appreciated, and rightly applied. Angels of God, whose perceptions are unclouded by sin, recognize the endowments of Heaven as bestowed with the intention that they be returned in such a way as to add to the glory of the great Giver. With the sovereignty of God is bound up the well-being of man. The glory of God is the joy and the blessing of all created beings. When we seek to promote his glory, we are seeking for ourselves the highest good which it is possible for us to receive. Brethren and sisters in Christ, God calls for the consecration to his service of every faculty, of every gift, you have received from him. He wants you to say, with David, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee."

THE CHARACTER OF GOD REVEALED IN CHRIST.

SAID the Saviour: "This is life eternal, that they might *know thee*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." And God declared by the prophet: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that *he understandeth and knoweth me*, that I am Jehovah, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

No man, without divine aid, can attain to this knowledge of God. The apostle says that "the world by wisdom knew not God." Christ "was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Jesus declared to his disciples, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." In that last prayer for his followers, before entering the shadows of Gethsemane, the Saviour lifted his eyes to heaven, and in pity for the ignorance of fallen men, he said, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee." "I have

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manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world."

From the beginning it has been Satan's studied plan to cause men to forget God, that he might secure them to himself. Hence he has sought to misrepresent the character of God, to lead men to cherish a false conception of him. The Creator has been presented to their minds as clothed with the attributes of the prince of evil himself, — as arbitrary, severe, and unforgiving, — that he might be feared, shunned, and even hated by men. Satan hoped to so confuse the minds of those whom he had deceived that they would put God out of their knowledge. Then he would obliterate the divine image in man, and impress his own likeness upon the soul; he would imbue men with his own spirit, and make them captives according to his will.

It was by falsifying the character of God and exciting distrust of him, that Satan tempted Eve to transgress. By sin the minds of our first parents were darkened, their natures were degraded, and their conceptions of God were molded by their own narrowness and selfishness. And as men became bolder in sin, the knowledge and the love of God faded from their minds and hearts. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God," they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."

At times, Satan's contest for the control of the human family appeared to be crowned with success. During the ages preceding the first advent of Christ, the world seemed almost wholly under the sway of the prince of darkness; and he ruled with a terrible power, as though through the sin of our first parents, the kingdoms of the world had become his by right. Even the covenant people, whom God had chosen to preserve in the world the knowledge of himself, had so far departed from him that they had lost all true conception of his character.

Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, full of mercy, tenderness, and compassion.

The thick darkness with which Satan had endeavored to enshroud the throne of Deity was swept away by the world's Redeemer, and the Father was again manifest to men as the light of life.

When Philip came to Jesus with the request, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us," the Saviour answered him, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Christ declares himself to be sent into the world as a representative of the Father. In his nobility of character, in his mercy and tender pity, in his love and goodness, he stands before us as the embodiment of divine perfection, the image of the invisible God.

Says the apostle, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Only as we contemplate the great plan of redemption can we have a just appreciation of the character of God. The work of creation was a manifestation of his love; but the gift of God to save the guilty and ruined race, alone reveals the infinite depths of divine tenderness and compassion. "God *so loved* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." While the law of God is maintained, and its justice vindicated, the sinner can be pardoned. The dearest gift that Heaven itself had to bestow has been poured out, that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." By that gift, men are uplifted from the ruin and degradation of sin, to become children of God. Says Paul, "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Brethren, with the beloved John I call upon you to "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." What love, what matchless love, that, sinners and aliens as we are, we may be brought back to God, and adopted into his family! We may address him by the endearing name, "Our Father," which is

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a sign of our affection for him, and a pledge of his tender regard and relationship to us. And the Son of God, beholding the heirs of grace, "is not ashamed to call them brethren." They have even a more sacred relationship to God than have the angels who have never fallen.

All the paternal love which has come down from generation to generation through the channel of human hearts, all the springs of tenderness which have opened in the souls of men, are but as a tiny rill to the boundless ocean, when compared with the infinite, exhaustless love of God. Tongue cannot utter it; pen cannot portray it. You may meditate upon it every day of your life; you may search the Scriptures diligently in order to understand it; you may summon every power and capability that God has given you, in the endeavor to comprehend the love and compassion of the heavenly Father; and yet there is an infinity beyond. You may study that love for ages; yet you can never fully comprehend the length and the breadth, the depth and the hight, of the love of God in giving his Son to die for the world. Eternity itself can never fully reveal it. Yet as we study the Bible, and meditate upon the life of Christ and the plan of redemption, these great themes will open to our understanding more and more. And it will be ours to realize the blessing which Paul desired for the Ephesian church, when he prayed "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him;* the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what *the riches of the glory* of his inheritance in the saints, and what is *the exceeding greatness of his power* to us-ward who believe."

It is Satan's constant study to keep the minds of men occupied with those things which will prevent them from obtaining the knowledge of God. He seeks to keep them dwelling upon what will darken

the understanding and discourage the soul. We are in a world of sin and corruption, surrounded by influences that tend to allure or dishearten the followers of Christ. The Saviour said, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Many fix their eyes upon the terrible wickedness existing around them, the apostasy and weakness on every side, and they talk of these things until their hearts are filled with sadness and doubt. They keep uppermost before the mind the masterly working of the arch-deceiver, and dwell upon the discouraging features of their experience, while they seem to lose sight of the heavenly Father's power and his matchless love. All this is as Satan would have it. It is a mistake to think of the enemy of righteousness as clothed with so great power, when we dwell so little upon the love of God and his might. We must talk of the mightiness of Christ. We are utterly powerless to rescue ourselves from the grasp of Satan; but God has appointed a way of escape. The Son of the Highest has strength to fight the battle for us; and through "Him that loved us," we may come off "more than conquerors."

There is no spiritual strength for us in constantly brooding over our weakness and backslidings, and bemoaning the power of Satan. This great truth must be established as a living principle in our minds and hearts, — the efficacy of the offering made for us; that God can and does save to the uttermost all who come unto him complying with the conditions specified in his word. Our work is to place our will on the side of God's will. Then, through the blood of the atonement, we become partakers of the divine nature; through Christ we are children of God, and we have the assurance that God loves us even as he loved his Son. We are one with Jesus. We walk where Christ leads the way; he has power to dispel the dark shadows which Satan casts across our path; and in place of darkness and discouragement, the sunlight of his glory shines into our hearts.

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Our hope is to be constantly strengthened by the knowledge that Christ is our righteousness. Let our faith rest upon this foundation; for it will stand fast forever. Instead of dwelling upon the darkness of Satan, and fearing his power, we should open our hearts to receive light from Christ, and to let it shine forth to the world, declaring that he is above all the power of Satan; that his sustaining arm will support all who trust in him.

Said Jesus, "The Father himself loveth you." If our faith is fixed upon God, through Christ, it will prove "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail, whither the Forerunner is for us entered." It is true that disappointments will come; tribulation we must expect; but we are to commit everything, great and small, to God. He does not become perplexed by the multiplicity of our grievances, nor overpowered by the weight of our burdens. His watchcare extends to every household, and encircles every individual; he is concerned in all our business and our sorrows. He marks every tear; he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. All the afflictions and trials that befall us here are permitted, to work out his purposes of love toward us, — "that we might be partakers of his holiness," and thus become participants in that fullness of joy which is found in his presence.

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." But the Bible in strongest terms sets before us the importance of obtaining a knowledge of God. Says Peter, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the *knowledge of God*, and of Jesus our Lord." "His divine power hath given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness, *through the knowledge of Him* that hath called us to glory and virtue." And the Scripture bids us, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace."

God has commanded us, "Be ye holy; for I am holy;" and an inspired apostle declares that without holiness "no man shall see the Lord." Holiness is agreement with God. By sin the image of God in man has been marred and well-nigh obliterated; it is the work of the gospel to restore that which has been lost; and we are to co-operate with the divine agency in this work. And how can we come into harmony with God, how shall we receive his likeness, unless we obtain a knowledge of him? It is this knowledge that Christ came into the world to reveal unto us.

The meager views which so many have had of the exalted character and office of Christ have narrowed their religious experience, and have greatly hindered their progress in the divine life. Personal religion among us as a people is at a low ebb. There is much form, much machinery, much tongue religion; but something deeper and more solid must be brought into our religious experience. With all our facilities, our publishing houses, our schools, our sanitariums, and many, many other advantages, we ought to be far in advance of our present position. It is the work of the Christian in this life to represent Christ to the world, in life and character unfolding the blessed Jesus. If God has given us light, it is that we may reveal it to others. But in comparison with the light we have received, and the opportunities and privileges granted us to reach the hearts of the people, the results of our work thus far have been far too small. God designs that the truth which he has brought to our understanding shall produce more fruit than has yet been revealed. But when our minds are filled with gloom and sadness, dwelling upon the darkness and evil around us, how can we represent Christ to the world? How can our testimony have power to win souls? What we need is to know God and the power of his love, as revealed in Christ, by an experimental knowledge. We must search the Scriptures diligently, prayerfully; our understanding must be quickened by the Holy Spirit, and our hearts must be

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uplifted to God in faith and hope and continual praise.

Through the merits of Christ, through his righteousness, which by faith is imputed unto us, we are to attain to the perfection of Christian character. Our daily and hourly work is set forth in the words of the apostle, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." While doing this, our minds become clearer, and our faith stronger, and our hope is confirmed; we are so engrossed with the view of his purity and loveliness, and the sacrifice he has made to bring us into agreement with God, that we have no disposition to speak of doubts and discouragements.

The manifestation of God's love, his mercy and his goodness, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart to enlighten and renew it, place us, through faith, in so close connection with Christ, that, having a clear conception of his character, we are able to discern the masterly deceptions of Satan. Looking unto Jesus, and trusting in his merits, we appropriate the blessings of light, of peace, of joy in the Holy Ghost. And in view of the great things which Christ has done for us, we are ready to exclaim, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

Brethren and sisters, it is by beholding that we become changed. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour, by contemplating the perfection of the divine character, and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image. Then let us not gather together all the unpleasant pictures, — the iniquities and corruptions and disappointments, the evidences of Satan's power, — to hang in the halls of our memory, to talk over and mourn over, until our souls are filled with discouragement. A discouraged soul is a body of darkness, not only failing himself to receive the light of God, but shutting it away from others. Satan loves to see the effect of the pictures of his triumphs, making human beings faithless and disheartened.

There are, thank God, brighter and more cheering pictures which the Lord has presented to us. Let us group together the blessed assurances of his love as precious treasures, that we may look upon them continually. The Son of God leaving his Father's throne, clothing his divinity with humanity, that he might rescue man from the power of Satan; his triumph in our behalf, opening heaven to man, revealing to human vision the presence-chamber where Deity unveils his glory; the fallen race uplifted from the pit of ruin into which sin had plunged them, and brought again into connection with the infinite God, and, having endured the divine test through faith in our Redeemer, clothed in the righteousness of Christ and exalted to his throne, — these are the pictures with which God bids us gladden the chambers of the soul. And "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," we shall prove it true that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

In heaven, God is all in all. There, holiness reigns supreme; there is nothing to mar the perfect harmony with God. If we are indeed journeying thither, the spirit of heaven will dwell in our hearts here. But if we find no pleasure now in the contemplation of heavenly things; if we have no interest in seeking the knowledge of God, no delight in beholding the character of Christ; if holiness has no attractions for us, — then we may be sure that our hope of heaven is vain. Perfect conformity to the will of God is the high aim to be constantly before the Christian. He will love to talk of God, of Jesus, of the home of bliss and purity which Christ has prepared for them that love him. The contemplation of these themes, when the soul feasts upon the blessed assurances of God, the apostle represents as tasting "the powers of the world to come."

Just before us is the closing struggle of the great controversy, when with "all power and signs and ly-

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ing wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness," Satan is to work to misrepresent the character of God, that he may "seduce, if it were possible, even the elect." If there was ever a people in need of constantly increasing light from heaven, it is the people that, in this time of peril, God has called to be the depositaries of his holy law, and to vindicate his character before the world. Those to whom has been committed a trust so sacred must be spiritualized, elevated, vitalized, by the truths they profess to believe. Never did the church more sorely need, and never was God more solicitous that she should enjoy, the experience described in Paul's letter to the Colossians when he wrote, We "do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be *filled with the knowledge of his will*, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

THE WORD MADE FLESH.

THE union of the divine with the human nature is one of the most precious and most mysterious truths of the plan of redemption. It is this of which Paul speaks when he says, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh."

This truth has been to many a cause of doubt and unbelief. When Christ came into the world,—the Son of God and the Son of man,—he was not understood by the people of his time. Christ stooped to take upon himself human nature, that he might reach the fallen race and lift them up. But the minds of men had become darkened by sin, their faculties were benumbed, and their perceptions dulled, so that they could not discern his divine character beneath the garb of humanity. This lack of appreciation on their part was an obstacle to the work which he desired to accomplish for them; and in order to give force to his teaching he was often under the necessity of defining and defending his position. By referring to his mysterious and divine character, he sought to lead their minds into a train of thought which would be favorable to the transforming power of truth. Again, he used the things of nature with which they were familiar, to illustrate divine truths. The soil of the heart was thus prepared to receive the good seed. He made his hearers feel that his interests were identified with theirs, that his heart beat in sympathy with them in their joys and griefs. At the same time they saw in him the manifestation of power and excellence far above that possessed by their most honored rabbis. The teachings of Christ were marked with a simplicity, dignity, and power heretofore unknown to them, and their involuntary exclamation was, "Never man spake like this man." The people listened to him gladly; but the priests and rulers—themselves false to their trust as guardians of the truth—hated Christ for the very grace revealed, which had drawn the multitudes away from them, to follow the Light of life. Through their influence, the Jewish nation, failing to discern his divine character, rejected the Redeemer.

The union of the divine and the human, manifest in Christ, exists also in the Bible. The truths revealed are all "given by inspiration of God;" yet they are expressed in the words of men, and are adapted to human needs. Thus it may be said of the Book of God, as it was of Christ, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." And this fact, so far from being an argument against the Bible, should strengthen faith in it as the word of God. Those who pronounce upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, accepting some portions as divine, while they reject other parts as human, overlook the fact that Christ, the divine, partook of our human nature, that he might reach humanity. In the work of God for

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man's redemption, divinity and humanity are combined.

There are many passages of Scripture which skeptical critics have declared to be uninspired, but which, in their tender adaptation to the needs of men, are God's own messages of comfort to his trusting children. A beautiful illustration of this occurs in the history of the apostle Peter. Peter was in prison, expecting to be brought forth next day to death; he was sleeping at night "between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands." Peter, suddenly awaking, was amazed at the brightness that flooded his dungeon, and the celestial beauty of the heavenly messenger. He understood not the scene, but he knew that he was free, and in his bewilderment and joy he would have gone forth from the prison unprotected from the cold night air. The angel of God, noting all the circumstances, said, with tender care for the apostle's need, "Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals." Peter mechanically obeyed; but so entranced was he with the revelation of the glory of heaven, that he did not think to take his cloak. Then the angel bade him, "Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord. And they went out, and passed through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him." The apostle found himself in the streets of Jerusalem alone. "And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety," — it was not a dream or a vision, but an actual occurrence, — "that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews."

Skeptics may sneer at the thought that a glorious angel from heaven should give attention to a matter so commonplace as caring for these simple human needs, and may question the inspiration of the narrative. But in the wisdom of God these things are recorded in sacred history for the benefit, not of angels, but of men, that as they should be brought into trying positions, they might find comfort in the thought that Heaven knows it all. Jesus declared to his disciples that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the heavenly Father, and that if God can keep in mind the wants of all the little birds of the air, he will much more care for those who may become the subjects of his kingdom, and through faith in him, may be the heirs of immortality. O, if the human mind were only to comprehend — in such measure as the plan of redemption *can* be comprehended by finite minds — the work of Jesus in taking upon himself human nature, and what is to be accomplished for us by this marvelous condescension, the hearts of men would be melted with gratitude for God's great love, and in humility they would adore the divine wisdom that devised the mystery of grace!

GOD'S CARE FOR HIS WORK.

It was under circumstances of difficulty and discouragement that Isaiah, while yet a young man, was called to the prophetic mission. Disaster was threatening his country. By their transgression of God's law the people of Judah had forfeited his protection, and the Assyrian forces were about to come against the kingdom of Judah. But the danger from their enemies was not the greatest trouble. It was the perversity of the people that brought upon

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the Lord's servant the deepest depression. By their apostasy and rebellion they were inviting the judgments of God. The youthful prophet had been called to bear to them a message of warning, and he knew that he would meet with obstinate resistance. He trembled as he viewed himself, and thought of the stubbornness and unbelief of the people for whom he was to labor. His task seemed to him almost hopeless. Should he in despair relinquish his mission, and leave Israel undisturbed to their idolatry? Were the gods of Nineveh to rule the earth, in defiance of the God of heaven?

Such thoughts as these were crowding upon his mind as he stood under the portico of the holy temple. Suddenly the gate and the inner vail of the temple seemed to be uplifted or withdrawn, and he was permitted to gaze within, upon the holy of holies, where even the prophet's feet might not enter. There rose up before him a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, while his train filled the temple. On each side the throne hovered the seraphim, two wings bearing them up, two veiling their faces in adoration, and two covering their feet. These angel ministers lifted up their voices in solemn invocation, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory," until post and pillar and cedar gate seemed to tremble at the sound, and the house was filled with their praise.

Never before had Isaiah realized so fully the greatness of Jehovah or his perfect holiness; and he felt that in his human frailty and unworthiness he must perish in that divine presence. "Woe is me!" he cried; "for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." But a seraph came to him, to fit him for his great mission. A living coal from the altar was laid upon his lips, with the words, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." And when the voice of God was heard saying, "Whom shall I send? and

who will go for us?" Isaiah with holy confidence responded, "Here am I; send me."

What though earthly powers should be arrayed against Judah? What though Isaiah should meet with opposition and resistance in his mission? He had seen the King, the Lord of hosts; he had heard the song of the seraphim, "The whole earth is full of his glory;" and the prophet was nerved for the work before him. The memory of this vision was carried with him throughout his long and arduous mission.

Ezekiel, the mourning exile prophet, in the land of the Chaldeans, was given a vision teaching the same lesson of faith in the mighty God of Israel. As he was upon the banks of the river Chebar, a whirlwind seemed to come from the north, "a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself; and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber." A number of wheels of strange appearance, intersecting one another, were moved by four living creatures. High above all these was "the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps; it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning." "And there appeared in the cherubim the form of a man's hand under their wings."

There were wheels within wheels, in an arrangement so complicated that at first sight they appeared to Ezekiel to be all in confusion. But when they moved, it was with beautiful exactness, and in perfect harmony. Heavenly beings were impelling these wheels, and above all, upon the glorious sapphire throne, was the Eternal One; while round about the throne was the encircling rainbow, emblem of grace and love. Overpowered by the terrible glory of the scene, Ezekiel fell upon his face, when a voice bade him arise, and hear the word of the Lord. Then there was given him a message of warning for Israel.

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This vision was given to Ezekiel at a time when his mind was filled with gloomy forebodings. He saw the land of his fathers lying desolate. The city that was once full of people was no longer inhabited. The voice of mirth and the song of praise were no more heard within her walls. The prophet himself was a stranger in a strange land, where boundless ambition and savage cruelty reigned supreme. That which he saw and heard of human tyranny and wrong distressed his soul, and he mourned bitterly day and night. But the wonderful symbols presented before him beside the river Chebar, revealed an overruling power mightier than that of earthly rulers. Above the proud and cruel monarchs of Assyria and Babylon, the God of mercy and truth was enthroned.

The wheel-like complications that appeared to the prophet to be involved in such confusion, were under the guidance of an infinite hand. The Spirit of God, revealed to him as moving and directing these wheels, brought harmony out of confusion; so the whole world was under his control. Myriads of glorified beings were ready at his word to overrule the power and policy of evil men, and bring good to his faithful ones.

In like manner, when God was about to open to the beloved John the history of the church for future ages, he gave him an assurance of the Saviour's interest and care for his people, by revealing to him "One like unto the Son of man," walking among the candlesticks, which symbolized the seven churches. While John was shown the last great struggles of the church with earthly powers, he was also permitted to behold the final victory and deliverance of the faithful. He saw the church brought into deadly conflict with the beast and his image, and the worship of that beast enforced on pain of death. But looking beyond the smoke and din of the battle, he beheld a company upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having, instead of the mark of the beast, the "Father's name written in their foreheads." And again he saw "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number

of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God," and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

These lessons are for our benefit. We need to stay our faith upon God; for there is just before us a time that will try men's souls. Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, rehearsed the fearful judgments that were to precede his second coming: "Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." While these prophecies received a partial fulfillment at the destruction of Jerusalem, they have a more direct application to the last days.

We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The Lord is at the door. There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. The controversies of the past are to be revived; new controversies will arise. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not yet even dreamed of. Satan is at work through human agencies. Those who are making an effort to change the Constitution, and secure a law enforcing Sunday observance, little realize what will be the result. A crisis is just upon us.

But God's servants are not to trust to themselves in this great emergency. In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John, we see how closely Heaven is connected with the events taking place upon the earth, and how great is the care of God for those who are loyal to him. The world is not without a ruler. The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of his church, in his own charge.

We permit ourselves to feel altogether too much care, trouble, and perplexity in the Lord's work. Finite men are not left to carry the burden of responsibility. We need to trust in God, believe in him, and go forward. The tireless vigilance of the

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heavenly messengers, and their unceasing employment in their ministry in connection with the beings of earth, show us how God's hand is guiding the wheel within a wheel. The divine Instructor is saying to every actor in his work, as he said to Cyrus of old, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me."

In Ezekiel's vision, God had his hand beneath the wings of the cherubim. This is to teach his servants that it is divine power that gives them success. He will work with them if they will put away iniquity, and become pure in heart and life.

The bright light going among the living creatures with the swiftness of lightning represents the speed with which this work will finally go forward to completion. He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of his designs, can carry forward his great work harmoniously. That which appears to finite minds entangled and complicated, the Lord's hand can keep in perfect order. He can devise ways and means to thwart the purposes of wicked men; and he will bring to confusion the counsels of them that plot mischief against his people.

Brethren, it is no time now for mourning and despair, no time to yield to doubt and unbelief. Christ is not now a Saviour in Joseph's new tomb, closed with a great stone, and sealed with the Roman seal; we have a risen Saviour. He is the King, the Lord of hosts; he sitteth between the cherubim; and amid the strife and tumult of nations, he guards his people still. He who ruleth in the heavens is our Saviour. He measures every trial. He watches the furnace fire that must test every soul. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of God's wrath shall strike through the hearts of his enemies, his people will be safe in his hands.

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